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THE

RICHES OF BUNYAN:

SELECTED FROM HIS WORKS,

FOR

THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,

BY REV. JEREMIAH CHAPLIN.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

BY

REV. WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS. D.D.

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PREFATORY NOTICE.

The subscriber has been requested by his friend the Rev. Jeremiah Chaplin, the worthy son of an honored father,* and the editor of the present selections from Bunyan, to attach to them some prefatory remarks. Needless as he feels it himself to be, and presumptuous as, to some, the attempt even may seem, to say aught in behalf of a work that, faithfully drawn as it is from Bunyan's overflowing stores, can require no other recommendation; yet the subscriber could not refuse all compliance with the wishes of one who has given diligent and hearty and appreciating study to the rich and varied remains of "the immortal Dreamer."

Many of the Christians of our time, though conversant with the Pilgrim's Progress, and the Holy War, are apparently little aware of the glowing genius, and fervent piety, and strong sense, and picturesque imagery, and racy, vigorous English, that mark the many other writings of the honored tinker of Elstow. These last, if less known than the story of the pilgrimage to the Celestial City, and of the siege and recovery of the good town of Mansoul, yet bear all of them the traces of the same vivid fancy, the same earnest heart, and the same robust

* The late Rev. Dr. Chaplin, the founder and first president of Waterville college, in the state of Maine.

and sanctified intellect. To save from comparative disuse and consequent unprofitableness—from being buried in an undeserved seclusion, if not oblivion, many sparkling truths, and pithy sayings, and pungent rebukes, likely to do great good if they could but have, in our busy day, a more general currency over the wide mart of the world;—and to bespeak a new circle of influence, and a broader sphere of notoriety and usefulness for these overlooked legacies of a good and great man of a former age, has been the editor's object in the prolonged sifting to which he has subjected all Bunyan's writings. Of that patient and conscientious study the present selection has been the result. It is not hoped, or even wished for them, that in the case of any readers able to give the requisite leisure, these excerpts should supersede the original writings. But these last, in mass, are beyond the means and the time which are at the command of many Christians, who would yet greatly prize the briefer examples of Bunyan's experience and Bunyan's teachings that are here presented. And even to others of more affluence and leisure, this manual may serve to commend the author's works in their entireness. Mr. Chaplin himself would most anxiously disavow any claim to have exhausted the mines from which he brings these gatherings. His specimens resemble rather those laces which the good Bunyan tagged in Bedford jail—not in themselves garments, but merely adjuncts and ornaments of larger fabrics. He who would see the entire wardrobe of the Dreamer's mind, and the shape and proportions of the goodly vestures of truth in which he

sought to array himself and his readers, must, after handling these the *laces*, turn to the *robes*, from whose edge these have been skilfully detached.

In the character and history of John Bunyan, the great Head of the church seems to have provided a lesson of special significance, and singular adaptedness, for the men and the strifes of our own time. Born of the people, and in so low a condition, that one of Bunyan's modern reviewers, by a strange mistake, construed Bunyan's self-disparaging admissions to mean that he was the offspring of gypsies—bred to one of the humblest of handicrafts, and having but the scantiest advantages as to fortune or culture, he yet rose, under the blessings of God's word and providence and Spirit, to widest usefulness, and to an eminence that shows no tokens of decline. Down to our own times, the branches of his expanding influence seem daily spreading and extending themselves; and the roots of his earthly renown seem daily shooting themselves deeper, and taking a firmer hold on the judgment of critics and the hearts of the churches. When the English houses of Parliament were recently rebuilt, among the imagery commemorative of the nation's literary glories, a place was voted for the bust of the Bedford pastor, once so maligned and persecuted. Once tolerated by dainty Christians for the sake of his piety, while they apologized for what they deemed his uncouthness; he is now, at last, even from men of the world, who do not value that piety, receiving the due acknowledgment of his rare genius and witching style. It is not many years since Gilpin, an English clergyman of cultivated taste—

himself a ready and popular writer—issued an edition of the Pilgrim's Progress, modified, if not rewritten in much of its phraseology, because he deemed the original too rude for usefulness. In our own day, one of the highest authorities as to the graces and powers of our language, the English statesman and scholar, T. B. Macaulay, has pronounced upon that style, which Gilpin by implication so disparaged, the most glowing eulogies. Schools and leisure and wealth are useful, but they are not indispensable either to felicity or to honor. Bunyan lacked them all; and yet in the absence of them achieved greatness—and what is far better, wide and enduring usefulness. No man, with God's exhaustless Scriptures in his hands, and with the rich book of nature and providence open in its pictured radiance before his eyes, needs to have either a dwindling or an impoverished soul. Of that latter volume, the works of God, as of that former, the word of God, Bunyan was evidently a delighted and unwearied student. His references to birds and insects, flowers and running brooks and evening clouds, and forests and mountains, all show a man whose nature was genially awake to the harmony and beauty of the material world that lay in order and splendor around him. It was, in Bunyan, no mere mimicry caught from books and companions—the echo of any fashion of his times. He writes of what he had seen with his own eyes; and seems to avoid aiming at aught beyond that. Hence to the ocean, which probably he never thus saw—and which had he beheld it in its placid vastness, or in its stormy wrath, he could not well have

forgotten—his writings contain, as far as we remember, no allusions, in all the varied and exuberant imagery which they employ. His books, more than those of his more learned contemporaries, Richard Baxter, and John Owen, that "mighty armor-bearer of the truth," as Bunyan happily calls him, were written exclusively from the resources of his own personal observation. And, in consequence of this, they have the freshness and odors of the outer world pervading them—scents and sounds of the highways along which, in the trampings of his trade, he had plodded, and of the hedges that had shaded him. To use the language of the patriarch's benediction, they have "THE SMELL OF A FIELD WHICH THE LORD HATH BLESSED." His books are, like Walton's Angler, of the open air, and the purling streams. You catch, back of the good man's Bible, as he reverently ponders and commends it, glimpses of rural landscapes, and of open skies—God's beautiful world, still lovely, even though sin has marred it. Like the Sermon on the Mount, Bunyan's page has the traits of field-preaching. And it was so, also, in his references to the inner world of his own heart. He wrote not from the dried specimens of earlier collectors—from the shrivelled and rustling leaves of some old herbary—from the philosophy and metaphysical analysis of other men's emotions, so much as from the glowing records of his own consciousness and experience, the fruits of grace and plants of righteousness, blooming and fragrant in the watered garden of his own heart. And this dipping of the pencil into his own soul, and into the freshness of nature around

him, is doubtless a part of the secret of his perpetual originality and unsating freshness. Now, when men say repiningly, and in a temper which impeaches alike society and providence, that a lowly lot, with its necessary privations and its consequent ignorance, is a barrier, perpetual and insuperable, against use fulness and happiness and honor, we turn to the name and memory of Bunyan as an embodied denial of the impeachment, and as carolling forth their cheerful rebuke of such unmanly and ungodly plaints. With God's grace in the heart, and with the gleaming gates of his heaven brightening the horizon beyond the grave, we may be reformers; but it cannot be in the destructive spirit displayed by some who, in the prophet's language, amid darkness on the earth, "fret themselves, and curse their King and their God, and look upward." Poverty cannot degrade, nor ignorance bedwarf, nor persecution crush, nor dungeon enthral the free, glad spirit of a child of God, erect in its regenerate strength, and rich in its eternal hopes and heritage. And this hopeful and elastic temperament colors and perfumes every treatise that Bunyan sent out even from the precincts of his prison. With a style sinewy as Cobbett's, and simple and clear as Swift's; with his sturdy, peasant nature showing itself in the roundness and directness of his utterance, how little has he of their coarseness. He was not, on the one hand, like Cobbett, an anarchist, or libeller; but yet, on the other hand, as little was he ever a lackey, cringing at the gates of Power, or a train-bearer in the retinue of Fashion. Still less was he, like Swift, the satirist of his times

and of his kind, snarling at his rulers, and turning at last to gnaw, in venomous rage, his own heart. And yet he who portrayed the character of By-ends, and noted the gossipings of Mrs. Bats-eyes, lacked neither keenness of vision, nor niceness of hand, to have made him most formidable in satire and irony.

His present station in the literature of Britain affords an illustration, familiar and obvious to every eye, of God's sovereignty, and of the arrangements of Him "who seeth not as man seeth." Had Pepys, or any other contemporary courtier that hunted for place and pension, or fluttered in levity and sin, in the antechambers of the later Stuarts, been asked, who of all the writers of the times were likely to go down to posterity among the lights of their age, how ludicrously erroneous would have been his apportionments of fame. Pepys might, from the Puritan education of his boyhood, have named Owen, Bates, and Baxter; or from the Conformist associations of his later years, have selected South, or Patrick, or Tillotson, as the religious writers who had surpassed all rivalry, or named a Walton or Castell, as having taken bonds of fame for the perpetuity of their influence. Had he known of Clarendon's preparations to become the historian of the Commonwealth and Restoration, or of Burnet's habits of preserving memoirs of the incidents and characters around him, he might have conjectured their probable honors in after-times. But in poetry he would have classed Dryden the royalist far above Milton the republican apologist of regicide; and might, aping the fashions of the palace, have preferred to either the author of Hu-

dibras together with the lewd playwrights who were the delight of a shameless court—hailing the last as the most promising candidates for posthumous celebrity. How little could he have dreamed that among these Puritans and Non-conformists, whose unpopular cause he had himself deserted, and whom his royal masters Charles and James had betrayed, amerced, exiled, and incarcerated; in those conventicles so closely watched and so sternly visited, which these persecuted confessors yet by stealth maintained; aye, and in those dungeons, whither the informer so often from these conventicles dragged them, British freedom had its truest guardians, and British literature some of its noblest illustrations. How little thought he that God had there, in his old and glorious school of trial, his "hidden ones," like Bunyan, whose serene testimony was yet to shine forth victorious over wrong and neglect, and reproach and ridicule, eclipsing so many contemporary celebrities, and giving to the homes and the sanctuaries of every land inhabited by an English race, one of the names "men will not willingly let die." How little could gilded and callous favorites of the palace have dreamed that their Acts of Uniformity and Five-mile Acts, and the like legislation of ecclesiastical proscription, were but rearing for the best men of the age, in the prisons where they had been immured, a Patmos, serene though stern, where the sufferer withdrew from man to commune with the King of kings. There the prisoned student was receiving for the churches new lessons of surpassing beauty and potency; and the confessor, pillaged by informers and bullied by judges,

and lamented in his own stricken household and desolate home, but only derided by his godless sovereign and heartless courtiers, yet often found himself compensated for every loss, when, like an earlier witness for the gospel of the Cross, enwrapped "IN THE SPIRIT, ON THE LORD'S DAY." Such were the schools where Non-conformist piety received its temper, its edge, and its lustre. The story of Bunyan is, we say, one of the golden threads binding together into harmony and symmetry, what, seen apart, seem but fragmentary and incoherent influences—the track of a divine Providence controlling the fates and reputations of the race. It is a Providence disappointing men's judgments and purposes, exalting the lowly and depressing the illustrious, rebuking despondency on the one hand and on the other curbing presumption, setting up one and putting down another. This is done even now and even here, as one of the many intimations which even time and earth present, of that final and universal reparation which is reserved for the general resurrection and the last judgment. Then the unforgetting and universal Sovereign will avenge all the forgotten of his people, nor leave unpunished one among the tallest and mightiest of his enemies. As the foreshadowing of this, there is often in this life what Milton has called, "*a resurrection of character.*" Seen in Bunyan and others on earth, it will be one day accomplished as to all the families of mankind. We pronounce *too soon* upon the apparent inequalities of fame and recompense around us; while we fail to take in the future as well as the present, and attempt to solve the mysteries of time

without including in the field of our survey the retributions of that eternity which forms the selvage and hem of all the webs of earth. And we pronounce not only too soon but *very superficially* upon the inequalities of happiness in the lot of those who fear and those who scorn God; while we look mainly or merely to the outward circumstances of home and station and bodily well-being, but take no note of the inner and more enduring elements of felicity, supplied to the sufferer for Christ by the blended powers of conscience and of hope—the one of them purified and pacified by the blood of the great sacrifice on Calvary; the other of them steadily and cheerfully soaring to the glories and rest of the mount Zion above. Faithful, in his cage, bearing the gibes and flouts of the rabble who thirsted for his blood, was one of the happiest men in all Vanity Fair, even ere the hour when his spirit mounted the fiery chariot that hurried him to his celestial home.

The style of Bunyan, it may be further said, is one of the countless and brilliant testimonials to the merit and power of our excellent received version of the Bible. Shut out, as Bunyan was, from direct contact with much other literature, he was most thoroughly conversant with the remains of prophets and apostles, embalmed in that venerable work. With those scriptures his mind was imbued, saturated, and tinged, through its whole texture and substance. Upon the phrascology and imagery and idioms of that book was formed his own vernacular style, so racy, glowing, and energetic—long indeed underrated and decried, but now beginning to re-

ceive its due honors, and winning the praise of critics whose judgment and taste few will have the hardihood to impeach. No immaculate perfection, indeed, is claimed for the English version of the Scriptures. No perfect version has the world ever seen, or is it ever like to see; but the writings of Bunyan must be admitted to stand among the many crowding trophies of the power of our common Bible to furnish the mind with "thoughts that breathe and words that burn"—with holiest conceptions and mightiest utterances.

And Bunyan himself, as a theologian on whose head no learned academy had laid its hand of patronage, or let fall its anointing dews, but who, whether confronting the fanatics of his time or the distinguished latitudinarian divines, showed himself so powerful a reasoner, so acute and clear and practical a thinker, and so mighty in his knowledge of the Scriptures—Bunyan himself, in his position and merits as a theologian, furnishes a standing monument of the power of the divine Spirit to fashion, by prayer and the study of the Bible, by affliction and by temptation, and by bitter persecutions even, a preacher, pastor, and writer, such as no university need have disdained to own. To that Spirit Bunyan gave zealous, earnest, and continual worship. Receiving his light and power from that good Spirit, and anxiously directing to that great Agent all the hopes and the praises of the flock whom he led, and of the readers whom he taught, his writings remain to diffuse and perpetuate the lesson of his life. Into whatever tribe of the ancient East or of the remote West

his Pilgrim has been introduced, the name and story of the writer bear, as their great lesson, the testimony that God's Scriptures are the richest of pastures to the human soul; and that God the Holy Ghost, as working with those Scriptures and by those Scriptures, is the one Teacher on whose sovereign aid all the churches, all the nations, and all the ages must depend. For the absence of those influences of the divine Spirit no earthly lore can compensate; while the exuberance of those influences may supply, as on Pentecost, the lack of all human helpers and patrons, and more than replace all universities and all libraries. We love to dwell on the illustrious Dreamer, as one of those characters for whom man had done so little and God did so much.

And to Christians who are neither authors nor preachers, this life of romantic privacy and illustrious obscurity has its lessons, alike to awe and to cheer, of solemn warning and of sustaining hope. No scene or station of all the earth that can eye paradise, or catch the gleams of the atoning cross, is truly ignoble or utterly forlorn. He who promised that, in the last days, the inscription which shone on the front of the high-priest's mitre, "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD," should be written also on the very bells of the horses, and that "every pot" in Jerusalem, and its outlying streets should become holy as the consecrated furniture of his own temple and altar, can in like manner render the lowliest scenes of human art and toil and traffic the schools of truth and duty and peace, schools ministering alike to the truest happiness and to the most perfect holiness of

our race. He who gave, as in Bunyan's case he did, to the maker or mender of culinary vessels the sacred skill to grave the all-holy Name, as one dignifying and consecrating them, on all the objects and scenes and accompaniments of his humble labors, can, in our times and in our various stations, make each allowable task of our earthly life to become also "HOLINESS TO THE LORD;" and as the Christian's body is made a TEMPLE of the Holy Ghost, so can he render the Christian himself, in all his social relations and enterprises, "A PRIEST *and a king* UNTO GOD." And the great principle of conciliation amid earth's jarring tribes and clashing interests, and of true and helpful communion among mankind, is not external but internal, not material but spiritual, not terrene but celestial; and is found in the blending by this one divine Spirit, of all earth's inhabitants, in a common contrition before a common redemption, tending as these inhabitants are, under a common sin and doom, to the same inevitable graves; but all of them invited, in the one name of one Christ, to aspire to the same heaven of endless and perfect blessedness.

WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS.

NEW YORK, January, 1851.

THE

RICHES OF BUNYAN.

I. GOD.

GLORY OF GOD.

God is the chief good—good so as nothing is but himself. He is in himself most happy; yea, all good and all true happiness are only to be found in God, as that which is essential to his nature; nor is there any good or any happiness in or with any creature or thing but what is communicated to it by God. God is the only desirable good; nothing without him is worthy of our hearts. Right thoughts of God are able to ravish the heart; how much more happy is the man that has interest in God. God alone is able by himself to put the soul into a more blessed, comfortable, and happy condition than can the whole world; yea, and more than if all the created happiness of all the angels of heaven did dwell in one man's bosom. I cannot tell what to say. I am drowned. The life, the glory, the blessedness, the soul-satisfying goodness that is in God, are beyond all expression.

It was this glory of God, the sight and visions of this God of glory, that provoked Abraham to leave his country and kindred to come after God. The reason why men are so careless of and so indifferent about their coming to God, is because they have their eyes blinded—because they do not perceive his glory.

God is so blessed a one, that did he not hide himself and his glory, the whole world would be ravished with

him; but he has, I will not say reasons of state, but reasons of glory, glorious reasons why he hideth himself from the world and appeareth but to particular ones.

What is heaven without God? But many there be who cannot abide God; no, they like not to go to heaven, because God is there. The nature of God lieth cross to the lusts of men. A holy God, a glorious holy God, an infinitely holy God; this spoils all. But to the soul that is awakened, and that is made to see things as they are, to him God is what he is in himself, the blessed, the highest, the only eternal good, and he without the enjoyment of whom all things would sound but empty in the ears of that soul.

Methinks, when I consider what glory there is at times upon the creatures, and that all their glory is the workmanship of God, "O Lord," say I, "what is God himself?" He may well be called the God of glory, as well as the glorious Lord; for as all glory is from him, so in him is an inconceivable well-spring of glory, of glory to be communicated to them that come by Christ to him. Wherefore, let the glory and love and bliss and eternal happiness that are in God, allure thee to come to him by Christ.

MAJESTY OF GOD.

What is God's majesty to a sinful man, but a consuming fire? And what is a sinful man in himself, or in his approach to God, but as stubble fully dry?

What mean the tremblings, the tears, those breakings and shakings of heart that attend the people of God, when in an eminent manner they receive the pronunciation of the forgiveness of sins at his mouth, but that the dread of the majesty of God is in their sight mixed therewith? God must appear like himself, speak to the soul like himself; nor can the sinner, when under these glorious discoveries of

its Lord and Saviour, keep out the beams of his majesty from the eyes of its understanding.

Alas, there is a company of poor, light, frothy professors in the world, that carry it under that which they call the presence of God, more like to antics than sober, sensible Christians; yea, more like to a fool of a play, than those who have the presence of God. They would not carry it so in the presence of a king, nor yet of the lord of their land, were they but receivers of mercy at his hand. They carry it even in their most eminent seasons, as if the sense and sight of God, and his blessed grace to their souls in Christ, had a tendency in it to make men wanton: but indeed it is the most humbling and heart-rending sight in the world; it is fearful.

Objection. But would you not have us rejoice at the sight and sense of the forgiveness of our sins?

Answer. Yes; but yet I would have you, and indeed you shall when God shall tell you that your sins are pardoned indeed, "rejoice with trembling;" for then you have solid and godly joy: a joyful heart and wet eyes in this, will stand very well together; and it will be so, more or less. For if God shall come to you indeed, and visit you with the forgiveness of sins, that visit removeth the guilt, but increaseth the sense of thy filth; and the sense of this, that God hath forgiven a filthy sinner, will make thee both rejoice and tremble. O, the blessed confusion which will then cover thy face, while thou, even thou, so vile a wretch, shalt stand before God to receive at his hand thy pardon, and so the first-fruits of thy eternal salvation. "That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." Jer. 33:8, 9; Ezek. 16:63.

Since the *name* of God is that by which his nature is expressed, and since he naturally is so glorious and incom-

prehensible, his name must needs be the object of our fear; and we ought always to have a reverent awe of God upon our hearts at what time soever we think of or hear his name; but most of all when we ourselves do take his holy and fearful name into our mouths, especially in a religious manner; that is, in preaching, praying, or holy conference.

Make mention then of the name of the Lord at all times with great dread of his majesty on your hearts, and in great soberness and truth. To do otherwise is to profane the name of the Lord, and to take his name in vain.

Next to God's nature and name, his service, his instituted worship, is the most dreadful thing under heaven His name is upon his ordinances, his eye is upon the worshippers, and his wrath and judgment upon those that worship not in his fear.

His presence is dreadful; and not only his presence in common, but his special, yea, his most comfortable and joyous presence. When God comes to bring a soul news of mercy and salvation, even that visit, that presence of God is fearful. When Jacob went from Beersheba to Haran, he met with God in the way by a dream, in the which he apprehended a ladder set upon the earth, whose top reached to heaven. Now in this dream, at the top of this ladder, he saw the Lord, and heard him speak unto him, not threateningly, not as having his fury come up into his face, but in the most sweet and gracious manner, saluting him with promise of goodness after promise of goodness, to the number of eight or nine. Yet, I say, when he awoke, all the grace that discovered itself in this heavenly vision to him could not keep him from dread and fear of God's majesty: "And Jacob awoke out of his sleep and said, 'Surely the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not;' and he was afraid, and said, 'How dreadful is this place; this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'"

At another time, when Jacob had that memorable visit from God, in which he gave him power as a prince to prevail with him; yea, and gave him a name, that by his remembering it he might call God's favor the better to his mind; yet, even then and there such dread of the majesty of God was upon him, that he went away wondering that his life was preserved. Man crumbles to dust at the presence of God; yea, though he show himself to us in his robes of salvation. Gen. 28:10-17; 32:30.

JUSTICE OF GOD.

You may see a few of the sparks of the justice of God against sin and sinners, by his casting off angels for sin from heaven and hell, by his drowning the old world, by his burning of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes.

God is resolved to have the mastery. God is merciful, and is come forth into the world by his Son, tendering grace unto sinners by the gospel, and would willingly make a conquest over them for their good by his mercy. Now he being come out, sinners like briars and thorns do set themselves against him, and will have none of his mercy. Well, but what says God? Saith he, "Then I will march on. I will go through them, and burn them together. I am resolved to have the mastery one way or another; if they will not bend to me and accept of my mercy in the gospel, I will bend them and break them by my justice in hell-fire."

HOLINESS OF GOD.

The holiness of God makes the angels cover their faces, and crumbles Christians, when they behold it, into dust and ashes.

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

The will of God is the rule of all righteousness, neither knoweth he any other way by which he governeth and

ordereth any of his actions. Whatsoever God doeth, it is good because he doeth it; whether it be to give grace or to detain it, whether in choosing or refusing. The consideration of this made the holy men of old ascribe righteousness to their Maker, even when yet they could not see the reason of his actions; they would rather stand amazed and wonder at the heights and depths of his unsearchable judgments, than quarrel at the most strange and obscure of them.

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IN CONVERSION.

Mercy may receive him that we have doomed to hell, and justice may take hold on him whom we have judged to be bound up in the bundle of life. We, like Joseph, are for setting of Manasseh before Ephraim; but God, like Jacob, puts his hands across, and lays his right hand upon the worst man's head and his left hand upon the best, Gen. 48, to the amazement and wonderment even of the best of men.

PROVIDENCE OF GOD IN CONVERSION.

Doth no man come to Jesus Christ by the will, wisdom, and power of man, but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father? Then here is room for Christians to stand and wonder at the effectual working of God's providence, that he hath made use of as means to bring them to Jesus Christ.

What was the providence that God made use of as a means, either more remote or near, to bring thee to Jesus Christ? Was it the removing of thy habitation, the change of thy condition, the loss of relations, estate, or the like? Was it the casting of thine eye upon some good book, the hearing thy neighbors talk of heavenly things, the beholding of God's judgments as executed upon others, or thine own deliverance from them, or thy being strangely cast under the ministry of some godly man? O take notice

of such providence or providences. They were sent and managed by mighty power to do thee good. God himself hath joined himself to this chariot, yea, and so blessed it that it failed not to accomplish the thing for which it was sent.

CONDESCENSION OF GOD.

Notwithstanding there is such a revelation of God in his word, in the book of creatures, and in the book of providences, yet the scripture says, "Lo, these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him;" so great is God above all that we have read, heard, or seen of him, either in the Bible, in heaven, or earth, or sea, or what else is to be understood. But now that a poor mortal, a lump of sinful flesh, or, as the scripture phrase is, poor dust and ashes, should be in the favor, in the heart, and wrapped up in the compassions of such a God! O amazing; O astonishing consideration! And yet, "this God is our God for ever and ever, and he will be our guide even unto death."

MERCY OF GOD.

As God has mercies to bestow, and as he has designed to bestow them, so those mercies are no fragments or the leavings of others, but mercies that are full and complete to do for thee what thou wantest, wouldst have, or canst desire. As I may so say, God has his bags that were never yet untied, never yet broken up, but laid by him through a thousand generations for those that he commands to hope in his mercy.

I tell you, sirs, you must not trust your own apprehensions nor judgments of the mercy of God; you do not know how he can cause it to abound: that which seems to be short and shrunk up to you, he can draw out and cause to abound exceedingly. There is a breadth and length and depth and height therein, when God will

please to open it, that for its infiniteness can swallow up not only all thy sins, but all thy thoughts and imaginations, and that also can drown thee at last. "Now unto him that is able," as to mercy, "to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

This therefore is a wonderful thing, and shall be wondered at to all eternity, that the river of mercy, that at first did seem to be but ancle deep, should so rise and rise that at last it became "waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over." Ezek. 47 : 5.

GOD THE JUSTIFIER.

The first cause of justification before God dependeth upon the will of God, who will justify because he will; therefore the meritorious cause must also be of his own providing, else his will cannot herein be absolute; for if justification depend upon our personal performances, then not upon the will of God. He may not have mercy upon whom he will, but on whom man's righteousness will give him leave; but his will, not ours, must rule here, therefore his righteousness and his only. So then, men are justified from the curse in the sight of God, while sinners in themselves.

GLORY OF GOD IN REDEMPTION.

In redemption by the blood of Christ, God is said to abound towards us in all *wisdom*. Here we see the highest contradictions reconciled; here justice kisseth the sinner; here a man stands just in the sight of God, while confounded at his own pollutions; and here he that hath done no good, hath yet a sufficient righteousness, "even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ."

The *justice* of God is here more seen than in punishing all the damned.

The *mystery of God's will* is here more seen than in hanging the earth upon nothing; while he condemneth Christ though righteous, and justifieth us though sinners, while he "maketh him to be sin for us, and us the righteousness of God in him."

The *power* of God is here more seen than in making heaven and earth; for, for one to bear and get the victory over sin when charged by the justice of an infinite Majesty, in so doing he shows the height of the highest power; for where sin by the law is charged, and that by God immediately, there an infinite Majesty opposeth, and that with the whole of his justice, holiness, and power; so then, he that is thus charged and engaged for the sin of the world, must not only be equal with God, but show it by overcoming that curse and judgment that by infinite justice is charged upon him for sin.

When angels and men had sinned, how did they fall and crumble before the anger of God! They had not power to withstand the terror, nor could there be worth found in their persons or doings to appease displeased justice. Here then is power seen: sin is a mighty thing; it crusheth all in pieces, save him whose Spirit is eternal. Heb. 9:14. Set Christ and his sufferings aside, and you neither see the evil of sin nor the displeasure of God against it; you see them not in their utmost. Jesus Christ made manifest his eternal power and godhead more by bearing and overcoming our sins, than in making or upholding the whole world. 1 Cor. 1:24.

The *love and mercy* of God are more seen in and by this doctrine than any other way. Here is love, that God sent his Son—his darling—his Son that never offended—his Son that was always his delight! Herein is love, that he sent him to save sinners—to save them by bearing their sins, by bearing their curse, by dying their death, and

by carrying their sorrows! Here is love, in that while we were yet without strength, Christ died for the ungodly!

GOD A FATHER.

O how great a task is it for a poor soul that comes, sensible of sin and the wrath of God, to say in faith but this one word, Father! I tell you, however hypocrites think, yet the Christian that is so indeed finds all the difficulty in this very thing; he cannot say God is his Father. O, saith he, I dare not call him Father. And hence it is that the Spirit must be sent into the hearts of God's people for this very thing, to cry Father; it being too great a work for any man to do knowingly and believingly without it. When I say knowingly, I mean knowing what it is to be a child of God and to be born again; and when I say believingly, I mean for the soul to believe, and that from good experience, that the work of grace is wrought in him. This is the right calling of God, Father; and not as many do, to say in a babbling way the Lord's prayer by heart. No, here is the life of prayer, when in or with the Spirit, a man being made sensible of sin and how to come to the Lord for mercy, he comes, I say, in the strength of the Spirit, and crieth, Father. That one word spoken in faith, is better than a thousand prayers in a formal, cold, lukewarm way.

Naturally the name of God is dreadful to us, especially when he is discovered to us by those names that declare his justice, holiness, power, and glory; but the word *Father* is a familiar word; it frighteth not the sinner, but rather inclineth his heart to love and be pleased with the remembrance of him. Hence Christ also, when he would have us to pray with godly boldness, put this word *Father* into our mouths, saying, "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven;" concluding thereby that in the familiarity which by such a word is intimated, the children of God

may take more boldness to pray for and ask great things. I myself have often found that when I can say but this word, *Father*, it doth me more good than when I call him by any other scripture name.

It is worth your noting, that to call God by his relative title was rare among the saints in Old Testament times; but now in New Testament times, he is called by no name so often as this, both by the Lord Jesus Christ himself and by the apostles afterwards. Indeed the Lord Jesus was he that first made this name common among the saints, and that taught them in their discourses, in their prayers, and in their writings, so much to use it; it being more pleasing to, and discovering more plainly our interest in God, than any other expression. For by this one name we are made to understand that all our mercies are the offspring of God, and that we also who are called are his children by adoption.

FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

Faithfulness in him that rules is that which makes Zion rejoice, because thereby the promises yield milk and honey. For now the faithful God, that keepeth covenant, performs to his church that which he told her he would. Wherefore our rivers shall run and our brooks yield honey and butter. Job 20 : 17.

Let this teach all God's people to expect, to look, and wait for good things from the throne. But O, methinks this throne out of which good comes like a river, who but would be a subject to it? who but would worship before it?

PRESENCE OF GOD.

God's presence is renewing, transforming, seasoning, sanctifying, commanding, sweetening, and lightening to the soul. Nothing like it in all the world: his presence supplies all wants, heals all maladies, saves from all dangers; is life in death, heaven in hell, all in all.

GOD'S REPENTING.

"And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth." Repentance in us is a change of the mind, but in God a change of his dispensations; for otherwise he repenteth not, neither can he, because it standeth not with the perfection of his nature. "In him is no variableness, nor shadow of turning."

Wherefore it is man, not God, that turns. When men reject the mercy and ways of God, they cast themselves under his wrath and displeasure; which, because it is executed according to the nature of his justice and the severity of his law, they miss of the mercy promised before; which that we may know, those shall one day feel that shall continue in final impenitency. Therefore God, speaking to their capacity, tells them he hath repented of doing them good. It repented the Lord that he had made Saul king; and yet this repentance was only a change of the dispensation which Saul by his wickedness had put himself under; otherwise the Strength, the Eternity of Israel will not lie nor repent.

The sum is, therefore, that men had now by their wickedness put themselves under the justice and law of God; which justice, by reason of its perfection, could not endure they should abide on the earth any longer; and therefore now, as a just reward of their deed, they must be swept from the face thereof.

PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

We should tremblingly glory and rejoice when we see God in the world, though upon those that are the most terrible of his dispensations. God the Creator will sometimes mount himself and ride through the earth, in such majesty and glory that he will make all to stand in the tent-doors to behold him. O how he rode in his chariots of salvation, when he went to save his people out of the land of Egypt. How he shook the nations. Then his glory

covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. His brightness was as the light: he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power.

These are glorious things, though shaking dispensations. God is worthy to be seen in his dispensations as well as in his word, though the nations tremble at his presence. "O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down," saith the prophet, "that the mountains might flow down at thy presence."

We know God, and he is our God, our own God; of whom or of what should we be afraid? When God roars out of Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem, when the heavens and the earth do shake, the Lord shall be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel.

He that knows the sea, knows the waves will toss themselves; he that knows a lion, will not much wonder to see his paw or to hear the voice of his roaring. And shall we that know our God, be stricken with a panic fear when he cometh out of his holy place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity? We should stand like those that are next to angels, and tell the blind world who it is that is thus mounted upon his steed, and that hath the clouds for the dust of his feet, and that thus rideth upon the wings of the wind: we should say unto them, "This God is our God for ever and ever, and he shall be our guide even unto death."

There are providences of two sorts, seemingly good and seemingly bad; and those do usually as Jacob did when he blessed the sons of Joseph, cross hands and lay the blessing where we would not. There are providences unto which we would have the blessings entailed; but they are not. And these are providences that smile upon the flesh, such as cast into the lap health, wealth, plenty, ease, friends, and abundance of this world's good: because these, as Manasseh's name doth signify, have in them an

aptness to make us forget our toil, our low estate, and from whence we were; but the great blessing is not in them.

There are providences again, that take away from us whatever is desirable to the flesh; such are sickness, losses, crosses, persecution, and affliction; and usually in these, though they shock us whenever they come upon us, blessing coucheth and is ready to help us. For God, as the name of Ephraim signifies, makes us fruitful in the land of affliction. He therefore, in blessing his people, lays his hands across, guiding them wittingly and laying the chiefest blessing on the head of Ephraim, or in that providence that sanctifies affliction. Abel—what to the reason of Eve was he, in comparison with Cain? Rachel called Benjamin the son of her sorrow; but Jacob knew how to give him a better name. Jabez, also, though his mother so called him because, as it seems, she brought him forth with more than ordinary sorrow, was yet more honorable, more godly, than his brethren.

He that has skill to judge of providences aright, has a great ability in him "to comprehend with other saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height;" but he that has no skill as to discerning them, is but a child in his judgment in those high and mysterious things. And hence it is that some shall suck honey out of that at which others tremble, for fear it should poison them. I have often been made to say, "Sorrow is better than laughter, and the house of mourning better than the house of mirth." And I have more often seen that the afflicted are always the best sort of Christians. There is a man never well, never prospering, never but under afflictions, disappointments, and sorrows; why, this man, if he be a Christian, is one of the best of men: "They that go down to the sea, that do business in great waters, they see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep."

I do not question but that there are some that are alive who have been able to say the days of affliction have been

the best unto them, and who could, if it were lawful, pray that they might always be in affliction, if God would but do to them as he did when his hand was last upon them; for by them he caused his light to shine.

Oh how should we, and how would we were but our eyes awake, stand and wonder at the preservations, the deliverances, the salvations, and benefits with which we are surrounded daily, while so many mighty evils seek daily to swallow us up as the grave!

How many deaths have some been delivered from and saved out of before conversion. Some have fallen into rivers, some into wells, some into the sea, some into the hands of men; yea, they have been justly arraigned and condemned, as the thief upon the cross, but must not die before they were converted. They were preserved in Christ, and called.

II. THE TRINITY.

If in the Godhead there be but one, not three, then the Father, the Son, or the Spirit must needs be that one, if any one only; so then the other two are nothing. Again, if the reality of a being be neither in the Father, Son, nor Spirit, as such, but in the eternal Deity, without consideration of Father Son and Spirit as three, then neither of the three are any thing but notions in us, or manifestations of the Godhead, or nominal distinctions, so related by the word; but if so, then when the Father sent the Son, and the Father and Son the Spirit, one notion sent another, one manifestation sent another. This being granted, it unavoidably follows there was no Father to beget a Son, no Son to be sent to save us, no Holy Ghost to be sent to comfort us and to guide us into all the truth of the Father

and Son. At most it amounts to but this: a notion sent a notion, a distinction sent a distinction, or one manifestation sent another. Of this error these are the consequences: we are only to believe in notions and distinctions, when we believe in the Father and the Son; and so shall have no other heaven and glory than notions and nominal distinctions can furnish us withal.

If thou feel thy thoughts begin to wrestle about this truth, and to struggle concerning this, one against another, take heed of admitting such a question, "How can this be?" for here is no room for reason to make it out; here is only room to believe it is a truth. You find not one of the prophets propounding an argument to prove it, but asserting it; they let it lie for faith to take it up and embrace it.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."

In a word, if you would see it altogether, God's love was the cause why Christ was sent to bleed for sinners. Jesus Christ's bleeding stops the cries of divine justice. God looks upon them as complete in him, and gives them to him as by right of purchase. Jesus ever lives to pray for them that are thus given unto him. God sends his Holy Spirit into them to reveal this to them, sends his angels to minister for them, and all this by virtue of an everlasting covenant between the Father and the Son. "Happy the people that are in such a case." He hath made them brethren with Jesus Christ, members of his flesh and of his bones, the spouse of this Lord Jesus; and all to show how dearly, really, and constantly he loveth us who by the faith of his operation have laid hold upon him.

The doctrine of the Trinity! that is the substance, that is the ground and fundamental of all, for by this doctrine and

this only the man is made a Christian; and he that has not this doctrine, his profession is not worth a button.

You must know that sometimes the church in the wilderness has but little light, but the diminution of her light is not then so much in or as to substantials, as it is as to circumstantial things; she has then the substantials with her in her darkest day.

The doctrine of the Trinity! you may ask me what that is? I answer, it is that doctrine that showeth us the love of God the Father in giving his Son, the love of God the Son in giving himself, and the love of the Lord the Spirit in his work of regenerating us, that we may be made able to lay hold of the love of the Father by his Son, and so enjoy eternal life by grace.

The Father's grace saveth no man without the grace of the Son, neither do the Father and the Son save any without the grace of the Spirit; for as the Father loves, the Son must die, and the Spirit must sanctify, or no soul must be saved.

Some think that the love of the Father, without the blood of the Son, will save them; but they are deceived, "for without shedding of blood is no remission."

Some think that the love of the Father and blood of the Son will do, without the holiness of the Spirit of God; but they are deceived also, for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

There is a third sort, that think the holiness of the Spirit is sufficient of itself; but they are deceived also, for it must be the grace of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the grace of the Spirit, jointly, that must save them.

But yet, as these three do put forth grace jointly and truly in the salvation of a sinner, so they put it forth after a diverse manner. The Father designs us for heaven, the Son redeems from sin and death, and the Spirit makes us meet for heaven: not by electing, that is the work of the

Father; not by dying, that is the work of the Son; but by his revealing Christ, and applying Christ to our souls, by shedding the love of God abroad in our hearts, by sanctifying our souls, and taking possession of us as an earnest of our possession in heaven.

III. THE SCRIPTURES.

The Scriptures carry such a blessed beauty in them to that soul that has faith in the things contained in them, that they do take the heart and captivate the soul of him that believeth them into the love and liking of them, believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets, and having hope towards God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead both of the just and unjust.

To him that believes the Scriptures aright, the promises or threatenings are of more power to comfort or cast down, than all the promises or threatenings of all the men in the world; and this was the cause why the martyrs of Jesus did so slight both the promises of their adversaries when they would have overcome them with proffering the great things of this world unto them, and also their threatenings when they told them they would rack them, hang them, burn them. None of these things could prevail upon them, or against them.

I never had in all my life so great an inlet into the word of God as now, [in prison.] Those scriptures that I saw nothing in before, were made in this place and state to shine upon me. Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now. Here I have seen and felt him indeed: O that word, "We have not preached unto you cunningly devised fables," and that, "God raised Christ from the dead and gave him glory, that our faith and hope

might be in God," were blessed words unto me in this condition.

These three or four scriptures also have been great refreshments in this condition to me, John 14 : 1–4 ; 16 : 33 ; Heb. 12 : 22–24 ; so that sometimes, when I have been in the savor of them, I have been able to laugh at destruction, and to fear neither the horse nor his rider. I have had sweet sights of the forgiveness of my sins in this place, and of my being with Jesus in another world. Oh the mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable company of angels, and God the judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect ; and Jesus has been sweet to me in this place : I have seen *that* here, which I am persuaded I shall never while in this world be able to express. I have seen a truth in this scripture, "Whom having not seen, ye love ; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

The glass was one of a thousand. It would present a man one way with his own features exactly, and turn it but another way and it would show one the very face and similitude of the Prince of the pilgrims himself. Yes, I have talked with them that can tell, and they have said that they have seen the very crown of thorns upon his head by looking in that glass ; they have therein also seen the holes in his hands, in his feet, and in his side. Yea, such an excellency is there in that glass, that it will show him to one where they have a mind to see him, whether living or dead, whether in earth or in heaven, whether in a state of humiliation or in his exaltation, whether coming to suffer or coming to reign. James 1 : 23–25 ; 1 Cor. 13 : 12 ; 2 Cor. 3 : 13.

Then said Greatheart to Mr. Valiant-for-Truth, "Thou hast worthily behaved thyself ; let me see thy sword." So

he showed it him. When he had taken it into his hand, and looked thereon awhile, he said, "Ha, it is a right Jerusalem blade."

VALIANT. "It is so. Let a man have one of these blades, with a hand to wield it and skill to use it, and he may venture upon an angel with it. He need not fear its holding, if he can but tell how to lay on. Its edge will never blunt. It will cut flesh and bones, and soul and spirit, and all."

I saw then in my dream, that they went on in this their solitary ground, till they came to a place at which a man is apt to lose his way. Now, though when it was light their guide could well enough tell how to miss those ways that led wrong, yet in the dark he was put to a stand; but he had in his pocket a map of all ways leading to or from the celestial city; wherefore he struck a light—for he never goes without his tinder-box also—and takes a view of his book or map, which bids him be careful in that place to turn to the right hand. And had he not been careful to look in his map, they had in all probability been smothered in the mud; for just a little before them, and that at the end of the cleanest way too, was a pit, none knows how deep, full of nothing but mud, there made on purpose to destroy the pilgrims in. Then thought I with myself, Who that goeth on pilgrimage but would have one of these maps about him, that he may look when he is at a stand which is the way he must take?

If we consider that our next state must be eternal, either eternal glory or eternal fire, and that this eternal glory or this eternal fire must be our portion according as the word of God revealed in the holy Scriptures shall determine, who will not but conclude that therefore the words of God are they at which we should tremble, and they by which we should have our fear of God guided and direct-

ed? for by them we are taught how to please him in every thing.

"Noah drank of the wine and was drunken." The Holy Ghost, when it hath to do with sin, loves to give it its own name; drunkenness must be drunkenness, murder must be murder, and adultery must bear its own name. Nay, it is neither the goodness of the man, nor his being in favor with God, that will cause him to lessen or mince his sin. Noah was drunken; Lot lay with his daughters; David killed Uriah; Peter cursed and swore in the garden, and also dissembled at Antioch. But this is not recorded to the intent that the name of these godly should rot, but to show that the best men are nothing without grace, and that "he that standeth should not be high-minded, but fear." Yea, they are also recorded for the support of the tempted, who, when they are fallen, are oft raised up by considering the infirmities of others. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

God's word has two edges; it can cut back-stroke and fore-stroke: if it do thee no good, it will do thee hurt; it is the savor of life unto life to those that receive it, but of death unto death to them that refuse it.

I do find in most such a spirit of idolatry concerning the learning of this world and wisdom of the flesh, and God's glory so much stained and diminished thereby, that had I all their aid and assistance at command, I durst not make use of aught thereof, and that for fear lest that grace and those gifts that the Lord hath given me, should be attributed to their wits, rather than to the light of the word and Spirit of God. Wherefore I will not take of them from a thread to a shoe-latchet, lest they should say, We have made Abraham rich.

What you find suiting with the scriptures, take, though it should not suit with authors; but that which you find against the scriptures, slight, though it should be confirmed by multitudes of them. Yea, further, where you find the scriptures and your authors agree, yet believe it for the sake of scripture's authority. I honor the godly as Christians, but I prefer the Bible before them; and having that still with me, I count myself far better furnished than if I had, without it, all the libraries of the two universities. Besides, I am for drinking water out of my own cistern: what God makes mine by the evidence of his word and Spirit, that I dare make bold with. Wherefore, seeing, though I am without their learned lines, yet well furnished with the words of God, I mean the Bible, I have contented myself with what I have there found; and having set it before your eyes,

> I pray read and take, sir, what you like best;
> And that which you like not, leave for the rest.

Read, and read again, and do not despair of help to understand something of the will and mind of God, though you think they are fast locked up from you. Neither trouble your heads though you have not commentaries and expositions; pray and read, and read and pray; for a little from God is better than a great deal from men: also what is from men is uncertain, and is often lost and tumbled over and over by men; but what is from God is fixed as a nail in a sure place. There is nothing that so abides with us, as what we receive from God; and the reason why Christians at this day are at such a loss as to some things, is because they are content with what comes from men's mouths, without searching and kneeling before God to know of him the truth of things. Things that we receive at God's hand come to us as things from the minting-house, though old in themselves, yet new to us. Old truths are always new to us, if they come to us with the smell of heaven upon them.

IV. MAN.

THE IMAGE OF GOD.

MAN is God's image, and to curse wickedly the image of God, is to curse God himself. Suppose that a man should say with his mouth, I wish that the king's picture were burned; would not this man's so saying render him as an enemy to the person of the king? Even so it is with them that by cursing wish evil to their neighbors or themselves; they contemn the image of God himself.

This world, as it dropped from the fingers of God, was far more glorious than it is now.

VALUE OF THE SOUL.

The soul is a thing, though of most worth, least minded by most. The souls of most lie waste, while all other things are inclosed.

Soul-concerns are concerns of the highest nature, and concerns that arise from thoughts most deep and ponderous. He never yet knew what belonged to great and deep thoughts, that is a stranger to soul-concerns.

The soul is capable of having to do with invisibles, with angels, good or bad, yea, with the highest and supreme Being, even the holy God of heaven. I told you before that God sought the soul of man to have it for his companion; and now I tell you that the soul is capable of communion with him, when the darkness that sin hath spread over its face is removed. The soul is an intelligent power, and it can be made to know and understand depths and heights and lengths and breadths, in those high, sublime, and spiritual mysteries that only God can reveal and teach; yea, it is capable of diving unutterably into them. And herein is God, the God of glory, much delighted—that he

hath made for himself a creature that is capable of hearing, of knowing and of understanding his mind, when opened and revealed to it.

The greatness of the soul is manifest by the greatness of the price that Christ paid for it to make it an heir of glory, and that was his precious blood. We do use to esteem things according to the price that is given for them, especially when we are convinced that the purchase has not been made by the estimation of a fool. Now the soul is purchased by a price, that the Son, the wisdom of God, thought fit to pay for the redemption thereof; what a thing then is the soul!

Suppose a prince, or some great man, should on a sudden descend from his throne or chair of state, to take up, that he might put in his bosom, something that he had espied lying trampled under the feet of those that stand by; would you think that he would do this for an old horseshoe, or for so trivial a thing as a pin or a point? Nay, would you not even of yourselves conclude that that thing for which the prince, so great a man, should make such a stoop, must needs be a thing of very great worth? Why, this is the case of Christ and the soul. Christ is the prince, his throne is in heaven, and as he sat there he espied the souls of sinners trampled under the foot of the law and death for sin. Now what doth he, but comes down from his throne, stoops down to the earth, and there, since he could not have the trodden-down souls without price, he lays down his life and blood for them.

ADAM'S TRANSGRESSION.

In a word, Adam led mankind out of their paradise; that is one woe: and put out their eyes, that is another; and left them to the leading of the devil. O sad! Canst thou hear this, and not have thy ears to tingle and burn on thy head? Canst thou read this and not feel it, and

not feel thy conscience begin to throb? If so, surely it is because thou art either possessed with the devil, or beside thyself.

O, this was the treasure that Adam left to his posterity, it was a broken covenant, insomuch that death reigned over all his children, and doth still to this day, as they come from him—both natural and eternal death. Rom. 5.

DEPRAVITY OF NATURE.

Let a man be as devout as is possible for the law and the holiness of the law. Yet if the principles from which he acts be but the habit of soul, the purity, as he feigns, of his own nature—principles of natural reason, or the dictates of human nature; all this is nothing else but the old gentleman in his holiday clothes: the old heart, the old spirit, the spirit of the man, not the spirit of Christ, is here.

LOVE OF SIN.

Sin has been delightfully admitted to an entertainment by all the powers of the soul. The soul hath chosen it rather than God; and also, at God's command, refuses to let it go.

If there be at any time, as indeed there is, a warrant issued out from the mouth of God to apprehend, to condemn and mortify sin, why then the souls of sinners do presently make these shifts for the saving of sin from things that by the word men are commanded to do unto it:

1. They will, if possible, hide it, and not suffer it to be discovered.

2. As the soul will hide it, so it will excuse it, and plead that this and that piece of wickedness is no such evil thing, men need not be so nice.

3. As the soul will do this, so to save sin it will cover it with names of virtue, either moral or civil.

4. If convictions and discovery of sin be so strong and

so plain that the soul cannot deny but that it is sin, and that God is offended therewith, then it will give flattering promises to God that it will indeed put it away; but yet it will prefix a time that shall be long first, saying, Yet a little sleep, yet a little slumber, yet a little folding of sin in my arms, till I am older, till I am richer, till I have had more of the sweetness and the delights of sin.

5. If God yet pursues, and will see whether this promise of putting sin out of doors shall be fulfilled by the soul, why then it will be partial in God's law; it will put away some, and keep some; put away the grossest, and keep the finest; put away those that can best be spared, and keep the most profitable for a help at a pinch.

6. Yea, if all sin must be abandoned, or the soul shall have no rest, why then the soul and sin will part—with such a parting as it is—even as Phaltiel parted with David's wife, with an ill-will and a sorrowful mind; or as Orpah left her mother, with a kiss. 2 Sam. 3:16; Ruth 1:14.

7. And if at any time they can or shall meet with each other again, and nobody never the wiser, O what courting will be between sin and the soul.

By all these, and many more things that might be instanced, it is manifest that sin has a friendly entertainment by the soul, and that therefore the soul is guilty of damnation; for what do all these things argue, but that God, his word, his ways and graces, are out of favor with the soul, and that sin and Satan are its only pleasant companions?

SIN.

Sin so sets itself against the nature of God that, if possible, it would annihilate and turn him into nothing, it being in its nature point-blank against him.

What a thing is sin; what a devil and master of devils is it, that it should, where it takes hold, so hang that noth-

ing can unclutch its hold, but the mercy of God and the heart-blood of his dear Son.

No sin is little in itself; because it is a contradiction of the nature and majesty of God.

O, sin, what art thou! What hast thou done! and what still wilt thou further do, if mercy and blood and grace do not prevent thee!

Sin is the living worm, the lasting fire;
Hell soon would lose its heat, could sin expire.
Better sinless in hell, than to be where
Heaven is, and to be found a sinner there.
One sinless with infernals might do well,
But sin would make of heaven a very hell.
Look to thyself then, keep it out of door,
Lest it get in and never leave thee more.

No match has sin but God in all the world;
Men, angels, has it from their station hurled,
Holds them in chains as captives, in despite
Of all that here below is called might.
Release, help, freedom from it none can give,
But even He by whom we breathe and live.
Watch therefore, keep this giant out of door,
Lest, if once in, thou get him out no more.

Fools make a mock at sin, will not believe
It carries such a dagger in its sleeve.
How can it be, say they, that such a thing,
So full of sweetness, e'er should wear a sting?
They know not that it is the very spell
Of sin, to make men laugh themselves to hell.
Look to thyself, then, deal with sin no more,
Lest He that saves, against thee shut the door.

There are sins against light, sins against knowledge, sins against love, sins against learning, sins against threatenings, sins against promises and vows and resolutions, sins against experience, sins against examples of anger, and

sins that have great and high and strange aggravations attending them; the which we are ignorant of, though not altogether, yet in too great a measure.

Sins go not alone, but follow one another as do the links of a chain.

A presumptuous sin is such a one as is committed in the face of the command, in a desperate venturing to run the hazard, or in a presuming upon the mercy of God through Christ, to be saved notwithstanding: this is a leading sin to that which is unpardonable, and will be found with such professors as do hanker after iniquity.

One leak will sink a ship; and one sin will destroy a sinner.

He that lives in sin and hopes for happiness hereafter, is like him that soweth cockle and thinks to fill his barn with wheat and barley.

Crush sin in the conception, lest it bring forth death in thy soul.

Some men's hearts are narrow upwards and wide downwards—narrow as to God, but wide for the world.

PRIDE.

Pride is the ringleader of the seven abominations that the wise man nameth. Prov. 6 : 16, 17.

Apparel is the fruit of sin; wherefore, let such as pride themselves therein remember, that they cover one shame with another. But let them that are truly godly have their apparel modest and sober, and with such shamefacedness put them on; remembering always, that the first

cause of our covering our nakedness was the sin and shame of our first parents.

ENVY.

Mr. Badman's envy was so rank and strong, that if it at any time turned its head against a man, it would hardly ever be pulled in again. He would watch over that man to do him mischief, as the cat watches over the mouse to destroy it; yea, he would wait seven years but he would have an opportunity to hurt him, and when he had it, he would make him feel the weight of his envy. This envy is the very father and mother of a great many hideous and prodigious wickednesses. It both begets them, and also nourishes them up till they come to their cursed maturity in the bosom of him that entertains them.

DRUNKENNESS.

Drunkenness is so beastly a sin, a sin so much against nature, that I wonder that any who have but the appearance of men can give up themselves to so beastly, yea, worse than beastly a thing.

Many that have begun the world with plenty, have gone out of it in rags, through drunkenness. Yea, many children that have been born to good estates, have yet been brought to a flail and a rake through this beastly sin of their parents.

Yea, it so stupefies and besots the soul, that a man who is far gone in drunkenness is hardly ever recovered to God. Tell me, when did you see an old drunkard converted? No, no; such a one will sleep till he dies, though he sleep on the top of a mast; so that if a man have any respect either to credit, health, life, or salvation, he will not be a drunken man.

"And Noah was uncovered." Behold ye now, that a little of the fruit of the vine lays gravity, grey hairs, and

a man that for hundreds of years was a lover of faith, holiness, goodness, sobriety, and all righteousness, shamelessly as the object to the eye of the wicked.

"And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years." He lived, therefore, to see Abraham fifty-and-eight years old; he lived also to see the foundation of Babel laid, nay, the top-stone thereof; and also the confusion of tongues; he lived to see of the fruit of his loins mighty kings and princes. But in all this time he lived not to do one work that the Holy Ghost thought worthy to record, for the savor of his name or the edification and benefit of his church, save only, that he died at "nine hundred and fifty years:" so great a breach did this drunkenness make upon his spirit.

SINNERS.

Usually in wicked families, some one or two are more arch for wickedness than are any other that are there. Now such are Satan's conduit-pipes; for by them he conveys of the spawn of hell, through their being crafty in wickedness, into the ears and souls of their companions

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"And she bare Cain:" the first sprout of a disobedient couple, a man in shape, but a devil in disposition.

The sinner, when his conscience is fallen asleep and grown hard, will lie like the smith's dog at the foot of the anvil, though the fire-sparks fly in his face.

Peace in a sinful course is one of the greatest of curses.

There is a wicked man that goes blinded, and a wicked man that goes with his eyes open, to hell; there is a wicked man that cannot see, and a wicked man that will not see,

the danger he is in; but hell-fire will open the eyes of both.

The soul with some is the game, their lusts are the dogs, and they themselves are the huntsmen; and never do they more halloo and lure and laugh and sing, than when they have delivered up their soul, their darling, to these dogs.

I may safely say, that the most of men who are concerned in a trade, will be more vigilant in dealing with a twelvepenny customer, than they will be with Christ when he comes to make unto them by the gospel a tender of the incomparable grace of God.

SINFUL EASE.

'Tis true there is no man more at ease in his mind—with such ease as it is—than the man that hath not closed with the Lord Jesus, but is shut up in unbelief. Oh, but that is the man that stands convicted before God, and that is bound over to the *great assize!* that is the man whose sins are still his own, and upon whom the wrath of God abideth; for the ease and peace of such, though it keep them far from fear, is but like to that of the secure thief that is ignorant that the constable standeth at the door: the first sight of an officer makes his peace to give up the ghost. Oh, how many thousands that can now glory that they were never troubled for sin against God—I say, how many be there that God will trouble worse than he troubled cursed Achan, because their peace, though false and of the devil, was rather chosen by them than peace by Jesus Christ, than peace with God by the blood of his cross.

Awake, careless sinners, awake, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. Content not yourselves either with sin or righteousness, if you be destitute of Jesus Christ; but *cry, cry,* Oh cry to God for light to

see your condition by. Light is in the word of God, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed; cry therefore for light to see this righteousness by: it is a righteousness of Christ's finishing, of God's accepting, and that which alone can save the soul from the stroke of eternal justice.

THE CHILD AND THE BIRD.

"My little bird, how canst thou sit
And sing amidst so many thorns?
Let me but hold upon thee get,
My love with honor thee adorns.
Thou art at present little worth,
Five farthings none will give for thee,
But prithee, little bird, come forth,
Thou of more value art to me.

"'Tis true it is sunshine to-day,
To-morrow birds will have a storm;
My pretty one, come thou away;
My bosom then shall keep thee warm.
Thou subject art to cold o' nights,
When darkness is thy covering;
At day thy danger's great by kites;
How canst thou then sit there and sing?

"Thy food is scarce and scanty too,
'Tis worms and trash that thou dost eat
Thy present state I pity do,
Come, I'll provide thee better meat.
I'll feed thee with white bread and milk,
And sugar-plums, if them thou crave;
I'll cover thee with finest silk,
That from the cold I may thee save.

"My father's palace shall be thine,
Yea, in it thou shalt sit and sing;
My little bird, if thou'lt be mine,
The whole year round shall be thy spring.
I'll teach thee all the notes at court,
Unthought-of music thou shalt play,
And all that thither do resort
Shall praise thee for it every day.

"I'll keep thee safe from cat and cur,
No manner o' harm shall come to thee;
Yea, I will be thy succorer,
My bosom shall thy cabin be."
But lo, behold, the bird is gone!
These charmings would not make her yield;
The child 's left at the bush alone,
The bird flies yonder o'er the field.

The child of Christ an emblem is;
The bird to sinners I compare;
The thorns are like those sins of theirs,
Which do surround them everywhere.
Her songs, her food, her sunshine day,
Are emblems of those foolish toys
Which to destruction lead the way—
The fruit of worldly, empty joys.

The arguments this child doth choose
To draw to him a bird thus wild,
Shows Christ familiar speech doth use,
To make the sinner reconciled.
The bird, in that she takes her wing
To speed her from him after all,
Shows us vain man loves any thing
Much better than the heavenly call.

THE SINNER WARNED.

Thy bed, when thou liest down in it, preacheth to thee thy grave; thy sleep, thy death; and thy rising in the morning, thy resurrection to judgment.

Wouldst thou know, sinner, what thou art? look up to the cross, and behold a weeping, bleeding, dying Jesus; nothing could do but that, nothing could save thee but his blood: angels could not, saints could not, God could not, because he could not lie, because he could not deny himself.

What a thing is sin, that it should sink all that bear its burden; yea, it sunk the Son of God himself into death

and the grave, and had also sunk him into hell-fire for ever, had he not been the Son of God, had he not been able to take it on his back and bear it away.

O this Lamb of God! Sinners were going to hell; Christ was the delight of his Father, and had a whole heaven to himself; but that did not content him, heaven could not hold him, he must come into the world to save sinners.

Aye, and had he not come thy sins had sunk thee, thy sins had provoked the wrath of God against thee to thy destruction for ever. There is no man but is a sinner; there is no sin but would damn an angel, should God lay it to his charge.

Sinner, the doctrine of Christ crucified cries therefore aloud unto thee, that sin has made thy condition dreadful. See yourselves, your sins, and consequently the condition that your souls are in by the death and blood of Christ. Christ's death gives us the most clear discovery of the dreadful nature of our sins.

I say again, if sin be so dreadful a thing as to break the heart of the Son of God, how shall a poor, wretched, impenitent, damned sinner wrestle with the wrath of God?

Awake, sinners; you are lost, you are undone, you perish, you are damned; hell-fire is your portion for ever, if you abide in your sins, and be found without a Saviour in the dreadful day of judgment.

Sinner, doth not all this discourse make thy heart twitter after the mercy that is with God, and after the way that is made by this plenteous redemption thereto? Methinks it should; yea, thou couldest not do otherwise, didst thou but see thy condition. Look behind thee, take a view of the path thou hast trodden these many years. Dost thou think that the way that thou art in will lead thee to the strait gate, sinner? Ponder the path of thy

feet with the greatest seriousness; thy life lies upon it; what thinkest thou? But make no answer till in the night, till thou art in the night-watches; commune with thine own heart upon thy bed, and there say what thou thinkest of whither thou art going.

Oh that thou wert serious! Is not it a thing to be lamented, that madness and folly should be in thy heart while thou livest, and after that to go to the dead; when so much life stands before thee, and light to see the way to it? Surely men void of grace and possessed of carnal minds must either think that sin is nothing, that hell is easy, and that eternity is short; or else that whatever God has said about the punishing of sinners, he will never do as he has said; or that there is no sin, no God, no heaven, no hell, and so no good or bad hereafter; or else they could not live as they do. But perhaps thou presumest upon it, and sayest, I shall have peace, though I live so sinful a life. Sinner, if this wicked thought be in thy heart, tell me again, dost thou thus think in earnest? Canst thou imagine thou shalt at the day of account outface God, or make him believe thou wast what thou wast not; or that when the gate is shut up in wrath, he will at thy pleasure and to the reversing of his own counsel, open it again to thee? Why shall thy deceived heart turn thee aside, that thou canst not deliver thy soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?

Friend, because it is a dangerous thing to be walking towards the place of darkness and anguish, and because notwithstanding, it is the journey that most of the poor souls in the world are taking, I have thought it my duty for preventing thee, to tell thee what sad success those souls have had that have persevered therein. Why, friend, it may be—nay, twenty to one, thou hast had thy back to heaven and thy face towards hell ever since thou didst come into the world. Why, I beseech thee, put a little

stop to thy earnest race, and take a view of what entertainment thou art like to have, if thou do in deed and in truth persist in thy course. "Thy ways lead down to death, and thy steps to hell." It may be, indeed, the path is pleasant to the flesh, but the end thereof will be bitter to thy soul. Hark! dost thou not hear the bitter cries of them that are newly gone before thee, saying, "Let him dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame!" Dost thou not hear them say, "Send one from the dead, to prevent my father, my brother, my father's house, from coming to this place of torment!" Shall not these mournful groans pierce thy flinty heart? Wilt thou stop thine ears and shut thine eyes? And wilt thou *not* regard? Take warning, and stop thy journey before it be too late. Wilt thou be like the silly fly, that is not quiet unless she be either entangled in the spider's web or burnt in the candle? O sinner, sinner, there are better things than *hell* to be had! There is heaven, there is God, there is Christ, there is communion with an innumerable assembly of saints and angels!

The poor, carnal, ignorant world miss of heaven, even because they love their sins and cannot part with them. John 3 : 9, 20.

The poor ignorant world miss of heaven, because they stop their ears against convictions, and refuse to come when God calls. Prov. 1 : 24–29.

The poor ignorant world miss of heaven, because the god of this world hath blinded their eyes, that they can neither see the evil and damnable state they are in at present, nor the way to get out of it; neither do they see the beauty of Jesus Christ, nor how willing he is to save poor sinners. 2 Cor. 4 : 2, 3.

The poor ignorant world miss of heaven, because they defer coming to Christ until the time of God's patience and grace is over. Some indeed are resolved never to

come; but some again say, "We will come hereafter;" and so it comes to pass, that because God called and they did not hear, so "they shall cry and I will not hear," saith the Lord. Zech. 7 : 11–13.

The poor ignorant world miss of heaven, because they have false apprehensions of God's mercy. They say in their hearts, "We shall have peace, though we walk in the imagination of our heart." Deut. 29 : 19–21.

The poor ignorant world miss of heaven, because they make light of the gospel that offers mercy to them freely, and because they lean upon their own good meanings and thinkings and doings. Matt. 22 : 1–5 ; Rom. 9 : 30, 31.

The poor carnal world miss of heaven, because by unbelief, which reigns in them, they are kept for ever from being clothed with Christ's righteousness, and from washing in his blood, without which there is no remission of sin nor justification.

Blush, sinner, blush! Ah, that thou hadst grace to blush.

My first word shall be to the openly profane. Poor sinner, thou readest that many that expect heaven will go without heaven. What sayest thou to this, poor sinner? If judgment begins at the house of God, what will be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God? This is Peter's question: canst thou answer it, sinner? Yea, I say again, if judgment must begin at them, will it not make thee think, What shall become of me? And I add, when thou shalt see the stars of heaven tumble down to hell, canst thou think that such a muck-heap of sin as thou art shall be lifted up to heaven? Peter asks thee another question: "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Canst thou answer this question, sinner? Stand among the righteous thou mayst not: "The ungodly shall not stand in the judg-

ment." Stand among the wicked thou then wilt not dare to do: where wilt thou appear, sinner? To stand among the hypocrites will avail thee nothing: "The hypocrite shall not come before him," that is, with acceptance, "but shall perish."

Because it concerns thee much, let me over with it again. When thou shalt see less sinners than thou art bound up by angels in bundles to burn them, where wilt thou appear, sinner? Thou mayst wish thyself another man, but that will not help thee, sinner. Thou mayst wish, "Would I had been converted in time;" but that will not help thee neither. And if, like the wife of Jeroboam, thou shouldst feign thyself to be another, the prophet, the Lord Jesus, would soon find thee out. What wilt thou do, poor sinner? Heavy tidings, heavy tidings will attend thee, except thou repent, poor sinner!

Sluggard, art thou asleep still? art thou resolved to sleep the sleep of death? Will neither tidings from heaven nor hell awake thee? Wilt thou say still, "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the arms to sleep?"

O that I was one that was skilful in lamentation, and had but a yearning heart towards thee, how would I pity thee; how would I bemoan thee! Poor soul, lost soul, dying soul, what a hard heart have I that I cannot mourn for thee! If thou shouldst lose but a limb, a child, or a friend, it would not be so much; but, poor man, it is thy soul: if it was to lie in hell but for a day, but for a year, nay, ten thousand years, it would in comparison be nothing; but O it is for ever! O this cutting *ever!*

Sinner, awake; yea, I say unto thee, awake! Sin lieth at thy door, and God's axe lieth at thy root, and hell-fire is right underneath thee. I say again, awake. Every tree

that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.

Poor sinner, awake: Eternity is coming, and his Son; they are both coming to judge the world: awake; art yet asleep, poor sinner? let me set the trumpet to thine ear once again. The heavens will be shortly on a burning flame; the earth and the works thereof shall be burned up, and then wicked men shall go into perdition: dost thou hear this, sinner?

Hark again: the sweet morsels of sin will then be fled and gone, and the bitter, burning fruits of them only left. What sayst thou now, sinner? canst thou drink hell-fire? will the wrath of God be a pleasant dish to thy taste? This must be thine every day's meat and drink in hell, sinner.

I will yet propound to thee God's ponderous question, and then for this time leave thee: "Can thine heart endure, or can thy hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee, saith the Lord?" What sayst thou? Wilt thou answer this question now; or wilt thou take time to do it; or wilt thou be desperate and venture all? And let me put this text in thine ear to keep it open, and so the Lord have mercy upon thee: "Upon the wicked shall the Lord rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and a horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup." Repent, sinners.

CONSCIENCE.

Conscience hath its place in the soul, where it is as a judge to discern of things good or bad, and judge them accordingly. Romans 2:14. This conscience is that in which is the law of nature, 1 Cor. 11:14, which is able to teach the Gentiles that sin against the law is sin against God.

Now this conscience, this nature itself, because it can control and chide them for sin who give ear unto it—must it therefore be idolized and made a god of? O wonder-

ful! that men should make a God and a Christ of their consciences because they can convince of sin.

Thou sayest, He that convinces of sins against the law, leads up to the fulfilling of the law. Friend, thy conscience convinces of sins against the law: follow thy conscience, and it may lead thee under the curse of the law, through its weakness; but it can never deliver thee from the curse of the law by its power. For if righteousness come by obedience to the law, or by thy conscience either, then Christ is dead in vain. Gal. 2:21.

A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

This must needs be a blessed help in distress, for a man to have a good conscience when affliction hath taken hold on him; for a man then, in his looking behind and before, to return with peace to his own soul, that man must needs find honey in this lion.

This is the way to maintain always the answer, the echoing answer of a good conscience in thy own soul. Godliness is of great use this way; for the man that hath a good conscience to God-ward, hath a continual feast in his own soul: while others say there is casting down, he shall say there is lifting up; for God shall save the humble person. Some indeed, in the midst of their profession, are reproached, smitten, and condemned of their own heart, their conscience still biting and stinging them because of the uncleanness of their hands; and they cannot lift up their face unto God, they have not the answer of a good conscience towards him, but must walk as persons false to their God and as traitors to their own eternal welfare. But the godly upright man shall have the light shine upon his ways, and he shall take his steps in butter and honey. The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever. "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and

knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God."

A TENDER CONSCIENCE.

A tender conscience is to some people like Solomon's brawling woman, a burthen to those that have it; but let it be to thee like those that invited David to go up to the house of the Lord.

A GUILTY CONSCIENCE.

"And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God." These latter words are spoken, not to persuade us that men can hide themselves from God, but that Adam and those that are his by nature will seek to do it, because they do not know him aright. These words therefore further show us what a bitter thing sin is to the soul; it is only for hiding-work, sometimes under its fig-leaves, sometimes among the trees of the garden. O what a shaking, starting, timorous evil conscience is a sinful, guilty conscience: especially when it is but a little awakened, it could run its head into every hole, first by one fancy, then by another; for the power and goodness of a man's own righteousness cannot withstand or answer the demands of the justice of God and his holy law.

There is yet another witness for the condemning transgressors of these laws, and that is conscience: "Their consciences also bearing witness," says the apostle. Conscience is a thousand witnesses. Conscience! it will cry amen to every word that the great God doth speak against thee Conscience is a terrible accuser; it will hold pace with the witness of God, as to the truth of evidence, to a hair's breadth. The witness of conscience, it is of great authority; it commands guilt and fastens it on every soul which it accuses. Conscience will thunder and lighten at the day of judgment; even the consciences of the most pagan

sinners in the world will have sufficient wherewith to accuse, to condemn, and to make paleness appear in their faces and breaking in their loins, by reason of the force of its conviction. O the mire and dirt that a guilty conscience, when it is forced to speak, will cast up and throw out before the judgment-seat. It must out; none can speak peace nor health to that man upon whom God has let loose his own conscience. Cain will now cry, "My punishment is greater than I can bear;" Judas will hang himself; and both Belshazzar and Felix will feel the joints of their loins to be loosened, and their knees to smite one against another, when conscience stirreth.

When conscience is once thoroughly awakened, as it shall be before the judgment-seat, God will need say no more to the sinner than Solomon said to filthy Shimei, "Thou knowest all the wickedness that thy heart is privy to." As who should say, "Thy conscience knows, and can well inform thee of all the evil and sin that thou art guilty of." To all which it answers even as face answers a face in a glass; or as an echo answers the man that speaks: as fast, I say, as God chargeth, conscience will cry out, "Guilty, guilty, Lord; guilty of all, of every whit; I remember clearly all the crimes thou layest before me." Thus will conscience be a witness against the soul in the day of God.

V. THE LAW.

ITS NATURE AND EFFECTS.

The law is the chief and most pure resemblance of the justice and holiness of the heavenly Majesty, and doth hold forth to all men the sharpness and keenness of his wrath.

This is the rule and line and plummet whereby every

act of every man shall be measured; and he whose righteousness is not found every way answerable to this law, which all will fall short of but they that have the righteousness of God by faith in Jesus Christ, he must perish.

The law is spiritual, I am carnal. Therefore every requirement is rejected and rebelled against. Strike a steel against a flint, and the fire flies about you. Strike the law against a carnal heart, and sin appears, sin multiplies, sin rageth, sin is strengthened.

Sin seen in the glass of the law is a terrible thing; no man can behold it and live. "When the commandment came, sin revived and I died;" when it came from God to my conscience, as managed by an almighty arm, then it slew me. And now is the time to confess sin, because now a soul knows what it is, and sees what it is, both in the nature and consequence of it.

He that is under the law is under the edge of the axe.

The proper work of the law is to slay the soul, and leave it dead, in a helpless state.

The law has laid all men for dead as they come into the world; but all men do not see themselves dead, until they see the law that struck them dead striking in their souls and having struck them that fatal blow. As a man that is fast asleep in a house, and that on fire about his ears, and he not knowing it because he is asleep; even so because poor souls are asleep in sin, though the wrath of God, the curse of his law, and the flames of hell have beset them round about, yet they do not believe it because they are asleep in sin. Now, as he that is awakened and sees this, sees that through this he is a dead man, even so they that see their state by nature, being such a sad condi-

tion; do also see themselves by that law to be dead men naturally.

Take heed of fleshly wisdom. Reasoning suiteth much with the law: "I thought verily that I ought to do many things against the name of Jesus," and so to have sought for life by the law. For thus reason will say, Here is a righteous law, the rule of life and death; besides, what can be better than to love God, and my neighbor as myself? Again, God has thus commanded, and his commands are just and good; therefore, doubtless, life must come by the law. Further, to love God and keep the law, are better than to sin and break it; and seeing men lost heaven by sin, how should they get it again but by working righteousness? Besides, God is righteous, and will therefore bless the righteous. O the holiness of the law! It mightily swayeth with reason when a man addicts himself to religion. The light of nature teaches that sin is not the way to heaven; and seeing no word doth more condemn sin than the words of the ten commandments, it must needs be therefore the most perfect rule for holiness. Wherefore, says reason, the safest way to life and glory is to keep myself close to the law. But though the law indeed be holy, yet the mistake as to the matter in hand is as wide as the east from the west; for therefore the law can do thee no good, because it is holy and just; for what can he that has sinned expect from a law that is holy and just? Naught but condemnation. "There is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust."

Here is the poison; to set this law in the room of a Mediator, as those do who seek to stand just before God thereby. And then nothing is so dishonorable to Christ, nor of so soul-destroying a nature as the law; for that, thus placed, has not only power when souls are deluded, but power to delude by its real holiness, the understanding, conscience, and reason of a man; and by giving the

soul a semblance of heaven, to cause it to throw away Christ, grace, and faith.

Alas, he who boasteth himself in the works of the law, he doth not hear the law. When that speaks, it shakes mount Sinai, and writeth death upon all faces, and makes the church itself cry out, A Mediator! else we die.

The law out of Christ is terrible as a lion; the law in him is meek as a lamb.

FAITHFUL. "So I went on my way up the hill. Now when I had got about half-way up, I looked behind me and saw one coming after me swift as the wind; so he overtook me just about the place where the settle stands.

"So soon as the man overtook me, he was but a word and a blow; for down he knocked me, and laid me for dead. But when I was a little come to myself again, I asked him wherefore he served me so. He said, 'Because of thy secret inclination to Adam the first;' and with that he struck me another deadly blow on the breast, and beat me down backwards; so I lay at his foot as dead as before. When I came to myself again, I cried to him for mercy; but he said, 'I know not how to show mercy;' and with that knocked me down again. He had doubtless made an end of me, but that one came by and bid him forbear."

CHRISTIAN. "Who was it that bid him forbear?"

FAITHFUL. "I did not know him at first, but as he went by I perceived the holes in his hands and his side; then I concluded that he was our Lord. So I went up the hill."

CHRISTIAN. "The man that overtook you was Moses. He spareth none, neither knoweth he how to show mercy to those that transgress his law."

FAITHFUL. "I know it very well; it was not the first

time that he has met with me. It was he that came to me when I dwelt securely at home, and that told me he would burn my house over my head if I staid there."

This ungodly fear of God, is that which will put men upon adding to the revealed will of God their own inventions and their own performances of them, as a means to pacify the anger of God. For the truth is, where this ungodly fear reigneth, there is no end of law and duty. When those that you read of in the book of Kings, 2 Kings, 17 : 26, were destroyed by the lions because they had set up idolatry in the land of Israel, they sent for a priest from Babylon that might teach them the manner of the God of the land ; but behold, when they knew it, being taught it by the priest, yet their fear would not suffer them to be content with that worship only. "They feared the Lord," saith the text, "and served their own gods." And again, "So these nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images." It was this fear also that put the Pharisees upon inventing so many traditions ; as the washing of cups, and beds, and tables, and basins, with abundance of such other gear. Mark 7 : 4. None knows the many dangers that an ungodly fear of God will drive a man into.

How has it racked and tortured the papists for hundreds of years together ! for what else is the cause but this ungodly fear, at least in the most simple and harmless of them, of their penances—as creeping to the cross, going barefoot on pilgrimage, whipping themselves, wearing of sackcloth, saying so many pater-nosters, so many Ave-Marias, making so many confessions to the priest, giving so much money for pardons, and abundance of other the like—but this ungodly fear of God ? For could they be brought to believe this doctrine, that Christ was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification, and to apply it by faith with godly boldness to their own souls, this fear would vanish, and so consequently all those things with

which they so needlessly and unprofitably afflict themselves, offend God, and grieve his people.

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

Thou must have salvation either at the door of the law or at the door of grace. "But," sayest thou, "I am for having it at the hands of both. I will trust solely to neither. I love to have two strings to my bow. If one of them, as you think, can help me by itself, my reason tells me that both can help me better; therefore will I be righteous and good, and will seek by my goodness to be commended to the mercy of God; for surely he that hath something of his own to ingratiate himself into the favor of his prince withal, shall sooner obtain his mercy and favor than one that comes to him stripped of all good."

I answer, "But there are not two ways to heaven: there is but one 'new and living way which Christ hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;' and besides that one, there is no more. Heb. 10 : 19–24. Why then dost thou talk of two strings to thy bow?"

Mercy then is to be found alone in Jesus Christ. Again, the righteousness of the law is to be obtained only by faith of Jesus Christ; that is, in the Son of God is the righteousness of the law to be found; for he, by his obedience to his Father, is become the end of the law for righteousness. And for the sake of his legal righteousness—which is also called the righteousness of God, because it was God in the flesh of the Lord Jesus that did accomplish it—are mercy and grace from God extended to whomsoever dependeth by faith upon God, by this righteousness of Jesus, for them.

He that is dark as touching the scope, intents, and nature of the law, is also dark as to the scope, nature, and glory of the gospel.

I must confess it is a wonderful mysterious thing, and

he had need have a wiser spirit than his own that can rightly set these two covenants in their right places, that when he speaks of the one he doth not jostle the other out of its place. O, to be so well enlightened as to speak of the one, that is the law, for to magnify the gospel—and also to speak of the gospel so as to establish and yet not to idolize the law, nor any particulars thereof—it is rare; and to be heard and found but in very few men's breasts.

A man may appeal from the law to the throne, from Moses to Christ—from him that spoke on earth to him that speaks from heaven; but from heaven to earth, from Christ to Moses, none can appeal. Acts 3 : 22, 23.

Tell me, you that desire to mingle the law and the gospel together, and to make of both one and the same gospel of Christ, did you ever see yourselves undone and lost, unless the righteousness, blood, death, resurrection, and intercession of that man Christ Jesus in his own person, were imputed to you; and until you could by faith own it as done for you, and counted yours by imputation? Yea, or no? Nay, rather, have you not set up your consciences and the law, and counted your obedience to them better and of more value than the obedience of the Son of Mary without you to be imputed to you? And if so, it is because you have not been savingly convinced by the Spirit of Christ of the sin of unbelief.

I would not be mistaken; I do not say that the Spirit of Christ gives the least liberty to sin; God forbid; but its convictions are of a more saving and refreshing nature than the convictions of the law, and do more constrain the soul to holiness than that: the law saying, Work for life; the Spirit saying, Now to him that worketh not (for life,) but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. As thus: if I should owe to

two creditors ten thousand talents, the one should say unto me, "Thou owest me five thousand talents, pay that thou owest;" the other should say, "Thou owest me five thousand talents, and I frankly and freely forgive thee all."

Now, these expressions are contrary one to another; even so is the end of the convictions of the law not according to the end of the convictions of the Spirit of Christ: the one saying, "Pay me that thou owest;" the other saying, "Thou art frankly and freely forgiven all."

Then the Interpreter took Christian by the hand, and led him into a very large parlor that was full of dust, because never swept; the which, after he had reviewed it a little while, the Interpreter called for a man to sweep. Now, when he began to sweep, the dust began so abundantly to fly about, that Christian had almost therewith been choked. Then said the Interpreter to a damsel that stood by, "Bring hither water and sprinkle the room;" the which, when she had done, it was swept and cleansed with pleasure.

Then said Christian, "What means this?"

The Interpreter answered, "This parlor is the heart of a man that was never sanctified by the sweet grace of the gospel; the dust is his original sin and inward corruptions that have defiled the whole man. He that began to sweep at first is the law; but she that brought water and did sprinkle it, is the gospel. Now whereas thou sawest that so soon as the first began to sweep, the dust did so fly about that the room by him could not be cleansed, but that thou wast almost choked therewith: this is to show thee that the law, instead of cleansing the heart by its working, from sin, doth revive, put strength into, and increase it in the soul, even as it doth discover and forbid it; for it doth not give power to subdue it. Rom. 5:20; 7:11; 1 Cor. 15:56.

"Again, as thou sawest the damsel sprinkle the room

with water, upon which it was cleansed with pleasure; this is to show thee that when the gospel comes in the sweet and precious influences thereof to the heart, then, I say, even as thou sawest the damsel lay the dust by sprinkling the floor with water, so is sin vanquished and subdued, and the soul made clean through the faith of it, and consequently fit for the King of glory to inhabit. John 14 : 21–23; 15 : 3; Acts 15 : 9; Rom. 16 : 25, 26; Eph. 5 : 26.

When Christ dwells in my heart by faith and the moral law dwells in my members, the one to keep up peace with God, the other to keep my conversation in a good decorum, then am I right, and not till then.

But this will not be done without much experience, diligence, and delight in Christ. For there is nothing that Satan more desires, than that the law may abide in the conscience of an awakened Christian, and there take up the place of Christ and faith; for he knows if this may be obtained, the veil is presently drawn over the face of the soul, and the heart darkened as to the knowledge of Christ; and being darkened, the man is driven into despair of mercy, or is put upon it to work for life. There is therefore much diligence required of him that will keep these two in their places assigned them of God; much diligent study of the word, diligent prayer, with diligence to walk with God in the world.

When this law with its thundering threatenings doth attempt to lay hold on thy conscience, shut it out with a promise of grace: cry, The inn is taken up already; the Lord Jesus is here entertained, and here is no room for the law. Indeed, if it will be content with being my informer, and so lovingly leave off to judge me, I will be content; it shall be in my sight, I will also delight therein: but otherwise, I being now made upright without it, and that

too with that righteousness which this law speaks well of and approveth, I may not, will not, cannot, dare not make it my saviour and judge, nor suffer it to set up its government in my conscience; for by so doing I fall from grace, and Christ Jesus doth profit me nothing.'

The sum then of what hath been said is this: the Christian hath now nothing to do with the law as it thundereth and burneth on Sinai, or as it bindeth the conscience to wrath and the displeasure of God for sin; for from its thus appearing he is freed by faith in Christ. Yet he is to have regard thereto, and is to count it holy, just, and good; which that he may do, he is always, whenever he seeth or regards it, to remember that he who giveth it to us is *merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.*

Here thou mayst say, O law, thou mayst roar against sin, but thou canst not reach me; thou mayst curse and condemn, but not *my soul;* for I have a righteous Jesus, a holy Jesus, a soul-saving Jesus, and he hath delivered me from thy threats, thy curses, thy condemnations; I am out of thy reach and out of thy bounds; I am brought into another covenant, under better promises of life and salvation, free promises to comfort me without my merit, even through the blood of Jesus, the satisfaction given to God for me by him.

The law is that which standeth at the entrance of the paradise of God, as a flaming sword, turning every way to keep out those that are not righteous with the righteousness of God—that have not skill to come to the throne of grace by that new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. For though this law, I say, be taken away by Christ Jesus for all that truly and savingly believe, yet it remains in full force and

power in every tittle of it against every soul of man that now shall be found in his tabernacle, that is in himself and out of the Lord Jesus; it lieth, I say, like a lion rampant at the gates of heaven, and will roar upon every unconverted soul, fiercely accusing every one that now would gladly enter in through the gates into this city. So then, he that can answer all its most perfect and legal commands, and that can live in the midst of devouring fire and there enjoy God and solace himself, he shall dwell on high and shall not be hurt by this law. His place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him, and his waters shall be sure; thine eyes shall behold the King in his beauty, they shall see the land that is very far off.

THE LAW A RULE OF LIFE.

The law is cast behind the back of many, when it should be carried in the hand and heart that we might do it, to the end the gospel which we profess might be glorified in the world. Let then the law be with thee to love it, and do it in the spirit of the gospel, that thou be not unfruitful in thy life. Let the law, I say, be with thee, not as it comes from Moses, but from Christ; for though thou art set free from the law as a covenant for life, yet thou still art under the law to Christ; and it is to be received by thee, as out of his hand, to be a rule for thy conversation in the world.

VI. DIVINE GRACE.

GRACE, LOVE, AND MERCY.

I FIND that the goodness of God to his people is diversely expressed in his word, sometimes by the word grace, sometimes by the word love, and sometimes by the word mercy. When it is expressed by that word grace, then it is to show that what he doeth is of his princely will, his royal bounty, and sovereign pleasure. When it is expressed by that word love, then it is to show us that his affection was and is in what he doeth, and that he doeth what he doeth for us with complacency and delight. But when it is set forth to us under the notion of mercy, then it bespeaks us to be in a state both wretched and miserable, and that his bowels and compassions yearn over us in this our fearful plight.

GRACE DESCRIBED.

There are many things which men call the grace of God that are not.

1. The light and knowledge that are in every man. 2. That natural willingness that is in man to be saved. 3. That power that is in man by nature to do something, as he thinketh, towards his own salvation.

But do thou remember that the grace of God is his good-will and great love to sinners, in his Son Jesus Christ; by the which good-will they are sanctified, through the offering up of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

His blood is not laws, nor ordinances, nor commandments, but a price, a redeeming price. He justifies us by bestowing upon us, not by expecting from us. He justifies us by his grace, not by our works.

OPERATION OF GRACE.

The good child is not the first-born, but Abel. God

often doth as Jacob did, even cross hands in bestowing blessings, giving that which is best to him that is least esteemed; for Cain was "the man" in Eve's esteem: she thought, when she had him, she had got an inheritance; but as for Abel (vanity,) he was little worth; by his name they showed how little they set by him.

It is so with the sincere to this day; they bear not the name of glory with the world: Cain with them is the profitable son; Abel is of no credit with them, neither see they form or comeliness in him; he is the melancholy or lowering child whose countenance spoils the mirth of the world. "The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth."

Abel, last in appearance, but in truth the first in grace; as it also is at this day. Who do so flutter it out as our ruffling, formal worshippers? Alas, the good, the sincere, the humble, they seem to be least and last; but the conclusion of the tragedy will make manifest that the first is last and the last first.

"And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Herein are the true footsteps of grace discovered; the person must be the first in favor with God—the person first, the performance afterwards: for though it be true among men that the gift makes way for the acceptance of the person, yet in the order of grace, it is after another manner; for if the person be not first accepted, the offering must be abominable; for it is not a good work that makes a good man, but a good man makes a good work. The fruit does not make a good tree, but a good tree bringeth forth good fruit.

Abel then presented his person and offering, as shrouding both by faith under the righteousness of Christ, which lay wrapped up in the promise; but Cain stands upon his own legs, and so presents his offering. Abel therefore is accepted, both his person and offering, while Cain remains

accursed. This then makes the difference betwixt Abel and his brother; Abel had faith, but Cain had none. Abel's faith covered him with Jesus Christ; therefore he stood righteous in his person before God.

There is a man proceeded against for life by the law, and the sentence of death is in conclusion most justly and righteously passed upon him by the judge. Suppose now, that after this, this man lives and is exalted to honor, enjoys great things, and is put into place of trust and power, and this by him that he has offended, even by him that did pass the sentence upon him.

What will all say, or what will they conclude, even upon the very first hearing of this story? Will they not say, "Well, whoever he was that found himself wrapped up in this strange providence, must thank the mercy of a gracious prince; for all these things bespeak grace and favor?"

Forgiveness is according to the riches of God's grace, wherein he has abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence. Grace can continue to pardon, favor, and save—from falls, in falls, and out of falls. Grace can comfort, relieve, and help those that have hurt themselves; and grace can bring the unworthy to glory. This the law cannot do; this man cannot do; this angels cannot do; this God cannot do, but only by the riches of his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

A throne is the seat of majesty and greatness; it is not for things of an inferior quality to ascend or assume a throne. Now, then, since this river of water of life proceeds from the throne, it intimates that in grace and mercy there is great majesty; for grace, as it proceeds, has a voice from the throne. And indeed there is nothing in heaven or earth that can so awe the heart as the grace of

God. Hos. 3 : 5. It is that which makes a man fear; it is that which makes a man tremble; it is that which makes a man bow and bend, and break to pieces. Jer. 33 : 9; Exod. 34 : 6–9. Nothing has such majesty, and commanding greatness in and upon the hearts of the sons of men, as has the grace of God. There is nothing overmastereth the heart like grace, and so obligeth to sincere and unfeigned obedience as that.

Strong grace makes corruptions weak and strikes them through, laying them at the point of death, always gasping for life.

Mercy and the revelation thereof is the only antidote against sin. It is of a thawing nature; it will loose the heart that is frozen up in sin; yea, it will make the unwilling willing to come to Christ for life.

Some say, When grace and a good nature meet together, they do make shining Christians; but I say, When grace and a great sinner meet, and when grace shall subdue that great sinner to itself, and shall operate after its kind in the soul of that great sinner, then we have a shining Christian.

Men may fall by sin, but cannot raise up themselves without the help of grace.

There were two men that went on pilgrimage; the one began when he was young, the other when he was old: the young man had strong corruptions to grapple with, the old man's were weak with the decays of nature: the young man trode his steps as even as did the old one, and was every way as light as he. Who now, or which of them, had their graces shining clearest, since both seemed to be alike? The young man's, doubtless; for that which

heads it against the greatest opposition, gives best demonstration that it is strongest.

As nature, even where grace is, cannot without the assistance of that grace do any thing acceptably before God; so grace received, if it be not also supplied with more grace, cannot cause that we continue to do acceptable service to God.

A present dispensation of grace is like a good meal, a seasonable shower, or a penny in one's pocket, all of which will serve for the present necessity. But will that good meal that I ate last week enable me without supply to do a good day's work in this? or, will that seasonable shower which fell last year, be, without supplies, a seasonable help to the grain and grass that is growing now? or will that penny that supplied my want the other day—I say, will the same penny also, without a supply, supply my wants to-day?

The day of grace is the day of expense; this is our spending time. Hence we are called pilgrims and strangers in the earth; that is, travellers from place to place, from state to state, from trial to trial. Now, as the traveller at the fresh inn is made to spend fresh money, so Christians, at a fresh temptation, at a new temptation, are made to spend fresh and a new supply of grace. Great men, when and while their sons are travellers, appoint that their bags of money be lodged ready or conveniently paid in at such and such a place; and so they meet with supplies. Why, so are the sons of the great One; and he has allotted that we should travel beyond sea, or at a great distance from our Father's house: wherefore he has appointed that grace shall be provided for us, to supply at such a place, such a state or temptation, as need requires. But withal, as my lord expecteth his son should acquaint him with the present emptiness of his purse and with the difficulty he hath now to grapple with; so God our Father expects that we

should plead by Christ our need at the throne of grace, in order to a supply of grace. "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Then I saw in my dream that the Interpreter took Christian by the hand, and led him into a place where was a fire burning against a wall, and one standing by it always casting much water upon it to quench it; yet did the fire burn higher and hotter.

Then said Christian, "What means this?"

The Interpreter answered, "This fire is the work of grace that is wrought in the heart; he that casts water upon it to extinguish and put it out, is the devil; but in that thou seest the fire notwithstanding burn higher and hotter, thou shalt also see the reason of that." So he had him about to the backside of the wall, where he saw a man with a vessel of oil in his hand, of which he did also continually cast, but secretly, into the fire.

Then said Christian, "What means this?"

The Interpreter answered, "This is Christ, who continually with the oil of his grace maintains the work already begun in the heart; by the means of which, notwithstanding what the devil can do, the souls of his people prove gracious still. 2 Cor. 12:9. And in that thou sawest that the man stood behind the wall to maintain the fire; this is to teach thee that it is hard for the tempter to see how this work of grace is maintained in the soul."

There is to be seen at the bottom of this holy river, the glory of God. We are saved, saved by grace, saved by grace through the redemption that is in Christ, to the praise and glory of God. And what a good bottom is here. Grace will not fail, Christ has been sufficiently tried, and God will not lose his glory; therefore they that

drink of this river, shall doubtless be saved; to wit, they that drink of it with a spiritual appetite to it.

It pleased God, for the glory of his wisdom, to make this the way; to wit, to set up grace to reign. I have often thought, and sometimes said, If God will be pleased with any way, surely he will be pleased with his own. Now this is the way of his own devising, the fruit and effect of his own wisdom. Wherefore, sinner, please him, please him in that wherein he is well pleased; come to the waters, cast thyself into them and fear not drowning; let God alone to cause them to carry thee into his paradise, that thou mayest see his throne.

Let us take notice of the carriage of God to man, and again of man to God, in his conversion.

First, of God's carriage to man. He comes to him while he is in his sins; he comes to him now, not in the heat and fire of his jealousy, but in the cool of the day, in unspeakable gentleness, mercy, pity, and love—not in clothing himself with vengeance, but in a way of entreaty, and meekly beseecheth the sinner to be reconciled unto him. 2 Cor. 5: 19, 20.

It is expected among men, that he who gives the offence, should be the first in seeking peace; but, sinner, betwixt God and man it is not so: not that we loved God, not that we chose God; but God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. God is the first that seeketh peace; and in a way of entreaty, he bids his ministers pray you in Christ's stead: "As if God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

O sinner, wilt thou not open? Behold, God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ stand both at the door of thy heart, beseeching there for favor from thee, that thou wilt be reconciled to them; with the promise, if thou wilt

comply, to forgive thee all thy sins. O grace, O amazing grace! To see a prince entreat a beggar to receive an alms, would be a strange sight; to see a king entreat the traitor to accept of mercy, would be a stranger sight than that; but to see God entreat a sinner, to hear Christ say, "I stand at the door and knock, with a heart full and a heaven full of grace to bestow upon him that opens;" this is such a sight as dazzles the eyes of angels. What sayest thou now, sinner? Is not this God rich in mercy? hath not this God great love for sinners? Nay, further, that thou mayst not have any ground to think that all this is but complimenting, there is also here declared, that "God hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." If God would have stuck at any thing, it would have been at the death of his Son; but he delivered him up for us freely: how shall he not then with him freely give us all things?

Let us now come to the carriage of these sinners to God, and that from the first day he begins to deal with their souls, even to the time that they are to be taken up into heaven.

1. And to begin with God's ordinary dealing with sinners: when at first he ministers conviction to them by his word, how strangely do they behave themselves. They love not to have their consciences touched; they like not to ponder upon what they have been, what they are, or what is like to become of them hereafter: such thoughts they count unmanly and hurtful. And now they are for any thing rather than the word: an alehouse, a playhouse, sports, pleasures, sleep, the world, and what not, so they may stave off the power of the word of God.

2. If God now comes up closer to them, and begins to fasten conviction upon the conscience, though such convictions be the first step to faith and repentance, yea, to life

eternal, yet what shifts will they have to forget them and wear them off! Yea, although they now begin to see that they must either turn or burn, yet ofttimes they will study to waive a present conversion. They object, they are too young to turn yet; seven years hence is time enough; when they are old, or come upon a sick bed.

O what an enemy is man to his own salvation! I am persuaded that God has visited some of you often with his word, and you have thrown water, as fast as he hath by the word cast fire, upon your conscience.

Christian, what had become of thee, if God had taken thy denial for an answer, and said, "Then will I carry the word of salvation to another, and he will hear it?"

"Sinner, turn!" says God. "Lord, I cannot attend to it," says the sinner. "Turn or burn," says God. "I will venture that," says the sinner. "Turn and be saved," says God. "I cannot leave my pleasures," says the sinner; "sweet sins, sweet pleasures, sweet delights," says the sinner. But what grace is it in God thus to parley with the sinner! O the patience of God to a poor sinner! What if God should now say, "Then get thee to thy sins, get thee to thy delights, get thee to thy pleasures, take them for thy portion; they shall be all thy heaven, all thy happiness, all thy portion?"

3. But God comes again, and shows the sinner the necessity of turning now or not at all; yea, and giveth the sinner this conviction so strongly that he cannot put it off. But behold, the sinner has one spark of enmity still: if he must needs turn now, he will either turn from one sin to another, from great ones to little ones, from many to few, or from all to one, and there stop. But perhaps convictions will not thus leave him. Why, then he will turn from profaneness to the law of Moses, and will dwell as long as God will let him, upon his own seeming goodness. And now observe him, he is a great stickler for legal performance; now he will be a good neighbor, he will pay

every man his own, will leave off his swearing, the ale-house, his sports, and carnal delights; he will read, pray, talk of scripture, and be a very busy one in religion, such as it is; now he will please God, and make him amends for all the wrong he has done him, and will feed him with chapters, and prayers, and promises, and vows, and a great many more such dainty dishes as these; persuading himself that now he must be fair for heaven, and thinks besides that he serveth God as well as any man: but all this while he is as ignorant of Christ as the stool he sits on, and no nearer heaven than was the blind Pharisee, only he has got in a cleaner way to hell than the rest of his neighbors are.

Might not God now cast off this sinner, and cast him out of his sight? might he not leave him to his own choice, to be deluded by and to fall in his own righteousness, because he trusts to it and commits iniquity?

But grace, preventing grace preserves him. It is true, this turn of the sinner is a turning short of Christ. But,

4. God in this way of the sinner will mercifully follow him, and show him the shortness of his performances, the emptiness of his duties, and the uncleanness of his righteousness. This I speak of the sinner, the salvation of whose soul is graciously intended and contrived of God; for he shall by gospel light be wearied out of all; he shall be made to see the vanity of all, and that the personal righteousness of Jesus Christ, and that only, is it which of God is ordained to save the sinner from the due reward of his sins. But behold, the sinner now, at the sight and sense of his own nothingness, falleth into a kind of despair; for although he hath it in him to presume of salvation through the delusiveness of his own good opinion of himself, yet he hath it not in himself to have a good opinion of the grace of God in the righteousness of Christ. Wherefore he concludeth that if salvation be alone of the grace of God through the righteousness of Christ, and all of a man's own

is utterly rejected as to the justification of his person with God, then he is cast away.

Now, the reason of this sinking of heart is the sight that God has given him—a sight of the uncleanness of his best performance. The former sight of his immoralities did somewhat distress him, and make him betake himself to his own good deeds to ease his conscience; wherefore this was his prop, his stay. But behold, now God has taken this from under him, and now he falls. Wherefore his best doth also now forsake him, and fly away like the morning dew.

Besides, this revelation of the emptiness of his own righteousness brings also with it a further discovery of the naughtiness of his heart, in its hypocrisies, pride, unbelief, hardness of heart, deadness, and backwardness to all gospel obedience; which sight of himself lies like millstones upon his shoulders, and sinks him yet further into doubts and fears of damnation. For bid him now receive Christ; he answers, he cannot, he dares not. Ask him why he cannot; he will answer, he has no faith nor hope in his heart. Tell him that grace is offered him freely; he says, "But I have no heart to receive it." Besides, he finds not, as he thinks, any gracious disposition in his soul, and therefore concludes he does not belong to God's mercy, nor has an interest in the blood of Christ, and therefore dares not presume to believe. Wherefore he sinks in his heart, he dies in his thoughts, he doubts, he despairs, and concludes he shall never be saved.

5. But behold, the God of all grace leaves him not in this distress, but comes up now to him closer than ever; he sends the Spirit of adoption, the blessed Comforter, to him to tell him God is love, and therefore not willing to reject the broken in heart; bids him cry and pray for an evidence of mercy to his soul, and says, "Peradventure you may be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."

At this the sinner takes some encouragement; yet he

can get no more than that which will hang upon a mere probability, which, by the next doubt that ariseth in the heart, is blown quite away, and the soul left again in its first plight, or worse; where he lamentably bewails his miserable state, and is tormented with a thousand fears of perishing; for he hears not a word from heaven, perhaps for several weeks together. Wherefore unbelief begins to get the mastery of him, and takes off the very edge and spirit of prayer, and inclination to hear the word any longer; yea, the devil also claps in with these thoughts, saying, "All your prayers, and hearing, and reading, and godly company, which you frequent, will rise up in judgment against you at last; therefore better it is, if you must be damned, to choose as easy a place in hell as you can."

The soul at this being quite discouraged, thinks to do as it has been taught, and with dying thoughts it begins to faint when it goes to prayer or to hear the word. But behold, when all hope seems to be quite gone, and the soul concludes, "I die, I perish," in comes on a sudden the Spirit of God again, with some good word of God which the soul never thought of before; which word of God commands a calm in the soul, makes unbelief give place, encourages to hope and wait upon God again: perhaps it gives some little sight of Christ to the soul, and of his blessed undertaking for sinners.

But behold, so soon as the power of things again begins to wear off the heart, the sinner gives place to unbelief, questions God's mercy, and fears damning again. He also entertains hard thoughts of God and Christ, and thinks former encouragements were fancies, delusions, or mere think-sos.

And why doth not God now cast the sinner to hell, for thus abusing his mercy and grace? O no: "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he will have compassion on whom he will have compassion;" wherefore goodness and mercy shall follow him all the days of his life, that he may dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

6. God, therefore, after all these provocations, comes by his Spirit to the soul again, and brings sealing grace and pardon to the conscience, testifying to it that its sins are forgiven and that freely, for the sake of the blood of Christ. And now has the sinner such a sight of the grace of God in Christ, as kindly breaks his heart with joy and comfort. Now the soul knows what it is to eat promises; it also knows what it is to eat and drink the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ by faith; now it is driven by the power of his grace to its knees, to thank God for forgiveness of sins and for hopes of an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith which is in Christ; now it has a calm and a sunshine; now "he washes his steps with butter, and the rock pours him out rivers of oil."

7. But after this, perhaps the soul grows cold again; it also forgets the grace received, and waxes carnal; begins again to hanker after the world; loseth the life and savor of heavenly things; grieves the Spirit of God; wofully backslides; casteth off closet duties quite, or else retains only the formality of them; is a reproach to religion, and grieves the heart of them that are awake and tender of God's name.

But what will God now do? Will he take this advantage to destroy the sinner? No. Will he let him alone in his apostasy? No. Will he leave him to recover himself by the strength of his now languishing grace? No. What then? Why, he will seek this man out till he finds him, and bring him home to himself again: "For thus saith the Lord God, Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out, as a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among the sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away; I will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick." Ezek. 34: 11–16.

Of God's ordinary way of fetching the backslider home I will not now discourse; namely, whether he always breaketh his bones for his sins, as he broke David's, or whether he will all the days of his life for this leave him under guilt and darkness; or whether he will kill him now, that he may not be condemned in the day of judgment, as he dealt with them at Corinth. 1 Cor. 11:30–32.

God is wise, and can tell how to imbitter backsliding to them he loveth. He can break their bones and save them; he can lay them in the lowest pit, in darkness and the deep, and save them; he can slay them as to this life, and save them. And herein appears wonderful grace, that Israel is not forsaken.

8. But suppose God deals not either of these ways with the backslider, but shines upon him again, and seals up to him the remission of his sins a second time, saying, "I will heal their backslidings, and love them freely." What will the soul do now? Surely it will walk humbly now, and holily all its days. It will never backslide again, will it? It may happen it will not; it may happen it will. It is just as his God keeps him; for although his sins are of himself, his standing is of God; I say, his standing while he stands, and his recovery if he falls, are both of God. Wherefore, if God leaves him a little, the next gap he finds, away he is gone again: "My people," says God, "are bent to backsliding from me."

Here is grace. So many times as the soul backslides, so many times God brings him back again—I mean the soul that must be saved by grace; he renews his pardons and multiplies them. Yea, for aught I know, there are some saints, and they not long-lived either, that must receive, before they enter into life, millions of pardons from God for these; and every pardon is an act of grace, through the redemption that is in Christ's blood.

The first step to the cure of a wounded conscience is

for thee to know the grace of God, especially the grace of God as to justification.

Grace can pardon our ungodliness and justify us with Christ's righteousness; it can put the Spirit of Jesus Christ within us; it can help us when we are down; it can heal us when we are wounded; it can multiply pardons, as we through frailty multiply transgressions.

GRACE ABUSED.

A self-righteous man, a man of the law, takes grace and mercy for his greatest enemy.

The best of things that are of this world are some way hurtful. Honey is hurtful, wine is hurtful, silver and gold are hurtful; but grace is not hurtful. Never did man yet catch harm by the enjoyment and fulness of the grace of God. There is no fear of excess or surfeiting here. Grace makes no man proud, no man wanton, no man haughty, no man careless or negligent as to his duty that is incumbent upon him, towards either God or man. No; grace keeps a man low in his own eyes, humble, self-denying, penitent, watchful, savory in good things, charitable; and makes him kindly affectioned to the brethren, pitiful and courteous to all men.

True, there are men in the world that abuse the grace of God, as some are said to turn it into wantonness and into lasciviousness. But this is not because grace has any such tendency, but because such men are themselves empty of grace, and have only done as death and hell have done with wisdom, "heard the fame thereof with their ears."

Some receive the rain of God and the droppings of his clouds, because they continually sit under the means of grace. But alas, they receive it as stones receive showers, or as dunghills receive the rain: they either abide as hard

as stones still, or else return nothing to heaven for his mercy, but as dunghills do, a company of stinking fumes

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To slight grace, to do despite to the Spirit of grace, to prefer our own works, thus derogating from grace—what is it but to contemn God? to contemn him when he is on the throne, when he is on the throne of his glory? I say again, it is to spit in his face, even then when he commands thee to bow before him, to be subject unto him, and to glorify the grace of his glory, that proceeds from the throne of his glory. If men in old time were damned because they glorified him not as God, shall not they be more than damned, if more than damned can be, who glorify him not for his grace? And, to be sure, none glorify him for his grace but those that close in therewith, and submit themselves thereto. Talkers of grace are but mockers of God, but flatterers of God. Grace God has exalted; has set it upon the throne, and so made it a king, and given it authority to reign; and thou goest by and hearest thereof, but wilt not submit thyself thereto, neither thy soul, nor thy life. Why, what is this more than to flatter God with thy lips, and than to lie unto him with thy tongue? What is this but to count him less wise than thyself, while he seeks glory by that by which thou wilt not glorify him—while he displays his grace before thee in the world from the throne, and as thou goest by, with a nod thou callest it a fine thing, but followest that which leadeth therefrom? Tremble, tremble, ye sinners, that have despised the riches of his goodness. The day is coming when ye shall behold and wonder and perish, if grace prevaileth not with you to be content to be saved by it to the praise of its glory, and to the glory of him who hath set it upon the throne. Acts 13:38–41.

There is a spring that yields water good and clear, but the channels through which this water comes to us are

muddy, foul, or dirty; now of the channels the waters receive a disadvantage, and so come to us as savoring of what came not with them from the fountain, but from the channels.

This is the cause of the coolness, and of the weakness, and of the flatness, and of the many extravagances that attend some of our desires: they come warm from the Spirit and grace of God in us; but as hot water running through cold pipes, or as clear water running through dirty conveyances, so our desires gather soil.

GRACE—THE WATER OF LIFE.

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Rev. 22:1.

This "water of life" is the Spirit and grace of God, and the spirit of life. Zech. 12:10; John 4:10, 11, 14; 7:37–39; Rev. 11:11.

A throne is the seat of justice: "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne." Psal. 89:14. And it is also from justice that this river of grace flows to us: justice to Christ, and justice to those that are found in him. Rom. 3:24. God declares that he can justly justify, justly forgive: now, if he can justly justify and justly forgive, then can he give grace and cause that it should proceed to, yea, flow after us as a river. But whence must this come? the text says, from the throne—from the throne, the seat of justice; for from thence, by reason of what He hath found in Christ for us, he in a way of righteousness and justice lets out to us rivers of his pleasures, whose original is that great and wide sea of mercy that flows in his infinite heart beyond thought.

There is a river, clear and pleasant, the streams whereof make glad the city of God.

These are the waters that the doves love to sit by, be-

cause by the clearness of these streams they can see their pretty selves as in a glass. Song 5 : 12.

These be the streams where the doves wash their eyes, and by which they solace themselves and take great content. These streams are instead of a looking-glass ; their clearness presents us with an opportunity of seeing our own features.

As in fair waters a man may see the body of the sun, and of the moon, and of the stars, and the very body of heaven ; so he that stands upon the bank of this river, and that washeth his eyes with this water, may see the Son of God, the stars of God, the glory of God, and the habitation that God has prepared for his people. And are not these pleasant sights ? Is not this excellent water ? Has not this river pleasant streams ?

Some men fly from the "river of the water of life," as from a bear ; and some are afraid to drink of it, for fear it should be poison unto them. Some again, dare not take it, because it is not mixed, and as they, poor souls, imagine, qualified and made toothsome by a little of that which is called the wisdom of this world. Thus one shucks, another shrinks, and another will none of God. Meanwhile, whoso shall please to look into this river, shall find it harmless and clear ; yea, offering itself to the consciences of all men to make trial if it be not the only chief good, the only necessary waters, the only profitable for the health of the soul, of all the things that are in the world, and as clear of mischief as is the sun of spots.

In old times the ancients had their habitations by the rivers ; yea, we read of Aroer, that stood upon the brink of the river Arnon. Balaam also had his dwelling in his city Pethor, by the river of the land of the children of his people. O, by the river side is the pleasantest dwelling in the world ; and of all rivers, the river of the water of life is the best.

They that dwell there shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat or sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by springs of water shall he guide them. Isa. 49 : 10; Psal. 1 : 3; Jer. 17 : 8.

Trees planted by the rivers, and that spread out their roots by the rivers, they are the flourishing trees, they bring forth their fruit in their season. And the promise is, that men that take up their dwellings by this river of water of life, shall be fruitful as such trees.

If thou be a Christian, thou hast more than an ordinary call and occasion to abide by these waters; thy things will not grow but by these waters. Weeds, and the excellences of most men, we may find in the barren wilderness; they grow under every hedge, Jer. 31 : 12; but thine are garden, and so choice, things, and will not thrive without much water; no, not without the water of God's river. Isa. 21 : 1–3. Dwell therefore here, that thy soul may be as a watered garden.

By the characters that are given of this water of life, thou art capacitated to judge, when a notion, a doctrine, an opinion comes to thy ears, whether it is right good and wholesome, or how. This river is pure, is clear, is pure and clear as crystal. Is the doctrine offered unto thee so? or is it muddy and mixed with the doctrines of men? Look, man, and see if the foot of the worshippers of Bel* be not there; and if the waters be not fouled thereby. What water is fouled is not the water of life, or at least, not the water of life in its clearness. Wherefore, if thou findest it not right, go up higher to the spring-head; for always the nearer to the spring, the more pure and clear is the water. Fetch then thy doctrine from afar, if thou canst not have it good nearer hand. Job 36 : 3. Thy life lies at stake; the counterfeit of things is dangerous; every body that is aware, is afraid thereof. Now a counterfeit here is most

* Story of Bel and the dragon in the Apochrypha.

dangerous, is most destructive; wherefore take heed how you hear what you hear; for, as men say of the fish, by your color it will be seen what waters you swim in. Wherefore look you well to yourselves.

The grace of God is called a river, to show that it is only suited to those who are capable of living therein. Water, though it is that which every creature desireth, yet is not an element in which every creature can live. Who is it that would not have the benefit of grace, of a throne of grace? But who is it that can live by grace? even none but those whose temper and constitution is suited to grace. Hence, as the grace of God is compared to a river, so those that live by grace are compared to fish; for that, as water is that element in which the fish liveth, so grace is that which is the life of the saint. "And there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither; for they shall be healed, and every thing shall live whither the river cometh." Ezek. 47:9. Art thou a fish, man—art thou a fish? canst thou live in the water? canst thou live always, and nowhere else but in the water? is grace thy proper element? The fish dieth if she be taken out of the water, unless she be timely put in again; the saint dieth if he be not in this river. Take him from his river, and nothing can make him live; let him have water, water of life enough, and nothing can make him die.

I know that there are some things besides fish that can make a shift to live in the water; but the water is not their proper, their only proper element. The frog can live in the water, but not in the water only; the otter can live in the water, but not in the water only. Give some men grace and the world, grace and sin—admit them to make use of their lusts for pleasure, and of grace to remove their guilt, and they will make a pretty good shift, as we say; they will finely scrabble on in a profession. But hold them to grace only, confine their life to grace, put them into the

river and let them have nothing but river, and they die; the word, and way, and nature of grace, is to them as light bread, and their soul can do no other but loathe it, for they are not suited and tempered for that element.

VII. CHRIST.

THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST.

The first main design of the life and conversation of the Lord Jesus, was that thereby God, the Eternal Majesty, according to his promise, might be seen by, and dwell with, mortal men. For the Godhead being altogether in its own nature invisible, and yet desirous to be seen by and dwell with the children of men, therefore was the Son, who is the self-same substance with the Father, clothed with or tabernacled in our flesh, that in that flesh the nature and glory of the Godhead might be seen by and dwell with us. "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory;" what glory? "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Again, "The life"—that is, the life of God in the works and conversation of Christ—"was manifest, and we have seen it and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us." And hence he is called the image of the invisible God; or he by whom the invisible God is most perfectly presented to the sons of men.

Did I say before that the God of glory is desirous to be seen of us? Even so also have the pure in heart a desire that it should be so. "Lord," say they, "show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." And therefore the promise is for their comfort, that "they shall see God." But how then must they see him? Why, in the person, and by the life and works of Jesus. When Philip, under a mistake,

thought of seeing God some other way than in and by this Lord Jesus Christ, what is the answer? "Have I been so long time with you," saith Christ, "and hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very work's sake."

See, here, that both the words and works of the Lord Jesus were not to show you, and so to call you back to the holiness we had lost, but to give us visions of the perfections that are in the Father. "He hath given us the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." And hence it is that the apostle, in that brief collection of the wonderful mystery of godliness, places this in the front thereof: "God was manifest in the flesh"—was manifested in and by the person of Christ, when in the flesh he lived among us; manifest, I say, for this as one reason, that the pure in heart, who long after nothing more, might see him. "I beseech thee," said Moses, "show me thy glory." "And will God indeed dwell with men on the earth?" saith Solomon.

Though Adam be called the image or similitude of God, yet but so as that he was the shadow of a more excellent image. Adam was a type of Christ, who only is the express image of his Father's person, and the likeness of his excellent glory; for those things that were in Adam were but of a human, but of a created substance; but those things that were in Christ, of the same divine and eternal excellency with the Father.

Is Christ then the image of the Father, simply as considered of the same divine and eternal excellency with him? Certainly not; for an image is doubtless inferior to

that of which it is a figure. Understand, then, that Christ is the image of the Father's glory, as born of the Virgin Mary, yet so as being very God also: not that his Godhead in itself was a shadow or image, but by the acts and doing of that man, every act being infinitely perfect by virtue of his Godhead, the Father's perfections were made manifest to flesh. An image is to be looked upon, and by being looked upon, another thing is seen; so by the person and doings of the Lord Jesus, they that indeed could see him as he was, discovered the perfection and glory of the Father. "Philip, he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" Neither the Father nor the Son can by us at all be seen, as they are simply and entirely in their own essence. Therefore the person of the Father must be seen by us through the Son, as consisting of God and man; the Godhead, by working effectually in the manhood, showing clearly there through the infinite perfection and glory of the Father. "The word was made flesh, and" then "we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of his Father"—he being in his personal excellencies, infinitely and perfectly, what is recorded of his Father, "full of grace and truth."

When Jesus Christ came down from glory, it was that he might bring us to glory; and that he might be sure not to fail, he clothed himself with our nature—as if we should take a piece out of the whole lump instead of the whole, Heb. 11 : 14—and invested it with that glory which he was in before he came down from heaven. Eph. 2 : 6.

THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST.

We perceive love, in that the human nature, the nature of man, not of angels, is taken into union with God. Whose could consider this as it is possible for it to be considered, would stand amazed till he died with wonder. By this very act of the heavenly Wisdom we have an in-

conceivable pledge of the love of Christ to man; for in that he hath taken into union with himself our nature, what doth it signify but that he intends to take into union with himself our persons? For this very purpose did he assume our nature. Wherefore we read that in the flesh he took upon him, in that flesh he died for us, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

The psalmist saith of Christ, that "he was fairer than the children of men;" and that, as I believe in his outward man as well as in his inward part, he was the exactest, purest, completest, and beautifulest creature that ever God made, till his visage was so marred by his persecutions; for in all things he had, and shall have the preeminence.

THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST.

Christ did not only come into our flesh, but also into our condition, into the valley and shadow of death, where we were, and where we are, as we are sinners.

That which would have been death to some—the laying aside of glory, and the King of princes becoming a servant of the meanest form—this he of his own goodwill was heartily content to do. Wherefore he that was once the object of the fear of angels, is now become a little creature, a worm, an inferior one, born of a woman, brought forth in a stable, laid in a manger, scorned of men, tempted of devils, was beholden to his creatures for food, for raiment, for harbor, and a place wherein to lay his head when dead. In a word, he made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, that he might become capable to do this kindness for us, to give himself a ransom for us.

And it is worth your noting, that all the while that he was in the world, putting himself upon those other prepa-

rations which were to be antecedent to his being made a sacrifice for us, no man, though he told what he came about to many, had, as we read of, a heart once to thank him for what he came about. No; they railed on him, they degraded him, they called him devil, they said he was mad and a deceiver, a blasphemer of God and a rebel against the state; they accused him to the governor; yea, one of his own disciples sold him, another denied him, and they all forsook him, and left him to shift for himself in the hands of his horrible enemies, who beat him with their fists, spat on him, mocked him, crowned him with thorns, scourged him, made a gazing-stock of him, and finally, hanged him up by the hands and feet alive, and gave him vinegar to increase his affliction, when he complained that his anguish had made him thirsty. And yet all this could not take his heart off the work of our redemption. To die he came, die he would, and die he did, before he made his return to the Father, for our sins, that we might live through him.

When Christ betook himself to his ministry, he lived upon the charity of the people; when other men went to their own houses, Jesus went to the mount of Olives.

THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

Christ is rich indeed, both in his blood, resurrection, intercession, and all his offices, together with his relations, and all his benefits; all which he bestoweth upon every one that receiveth him, and maketh them unspeakably wealthy.

The pearl, as it is rich, and so worth much, so again it is beautiful and amiable, even to take the eyes of all beholders; it hath, I say, a very sweet and sparkling light and glory in it, enough to take the eye and affect the heart of all those that look upon it. And thus is Christ to all that come to him, and by him to the Father. "My Beloved

is white and ruddy, the chiefest of ten thousand; his mouth is most sweet, he is altogether lovely."

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Here is love, that God sent his Son, his darling, his Son that never offended, his Son that was always his delight. Herein is love, that he sent him to save sinners; to save them by bearing their sins, by bearing their curse, by dying their death, and by carrying their sorrows. Here is love, in that while we were yet enemies, Christ died for us; yea, here is love, in that while we were yet without strength, Christ died for the ungodly.

Oh, blessed Jesus, how didst thou discover thy love to man in thy thus suffering! And, O God the Father, how didst thou also declare the purity and exactness of thy justice, in that, though it was thine only, holy, innocent, harmless, and undefiled Son Jesus, that did take on him our nature and represent our persons, answering for our sins instead of ourselves; thou didst so wonderfully pour out thy wrath upon him, to the making of him cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And, O Lord Jesus, what a glorious conquest hast thou made over the enemies of our souls—even wrath, sin, death, hell, and devils—in that thou didst wring thyself from under the power of them all. And not only so, but hast led them captive which would have led us captive; and also hast received for us that glorious and unspeakable inheritance that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

The great Bringer of the gospel is the good Lord Jesus Christ himself; he came and preached peace to them that the law proclaimed war against. And to touch a little upon the dress in which, by the gospel, Christ presents

himself unto us, while he offers unto sinful souls his peace by the tenders thereof:

He is set forth as born for us, to save our souls. Isa. 9 : 6; Luke 2 : 9–12; 1 Cor. 15 : 3; Gal. 3 : 13; Rom. 10 : 4; Dan. 9 : 24.

He is set forth before us as bearing our sins for us, and suffering God's wrath for us.

He is set forth before us as fulfilling the law for us, and as bringing everlasting righteousness to us for our covering.

Again, as to the manner of his working out the salvation of sinners for them, that they might have peace and joy, and heaven and glory for ever:

He is set forth as sweating blood while he was in his agony, wrestling with the thoughts of death, while he was to suffer for our sins, that he might save the soul. Luke 22 : 24.

He is set forth as crying, weeping, and mourning under the lashes of justice that he put himself under, and was willing to bear for our sins.

He is set forth as betrayed, apprehended, condemned, spit on, scourged, buffeted, mocked, crowned with thorns, crucified, pierced with nails and a spear, to save the soul from being betrayed by the devil and sin; to save it from being apprehended by justice and condemned by the law; to save it from being spit on in a way of contempt by holiness; to save it from being scourged with guilt of sins as with scorpions; to save it from being continually buffeted by its own conscience; to save it from being mocked at by God; to save it from being crowned with ignominy and shame for ever; to save it from dying the second death; to save it from wounds and grief for ever.

Dost thou understand me, sinful soul? He wrestled with justice, that thou mightest have rest; he wept and mourned, that thou mightst laugh and rejoice; he was betrayed, that thou mightest go free; was apprehended, that

thou mightst escape; he was condemned, that thou mightst be justified, and was killed, that thou mightest live; he wore a crown of thorns, that thou mightest wear a crown of glory; and was nailed to the cross with his arms wide open, to show with what freeness all his merits shall be bestowed on the coming soul, and how heartily he will receive it into his bosom.

All this he did of mere good-will, and offers the benefit thereof unto thee freely. Yea, he comes unto thee in the word of the gospel, with the blood running down from his head upon his face, with his tears abiding upon his cheeks, as with the holes fresh in his hands and his feet, and as with the blood still bubbling out of his side, to pray thee to accept of the benefit, and to be reconciled to God thereby.

By this we may see his love, in that as a forerunner he is gone into heaven to take possession thereof for us; there to make ready and prepare for us our summer-houses, our mansions and dwelling-places; as if we were the lords, and he the servant. Oh, this love!

Thou Son of the Blessed, what grace was manifest in thy condescension! Grace brought thee down from heaven; grace stripped thee of thy glory; grace made thee poor and despicable; grace made thee bear such burdens of sin, such burdens of sorrow, such burdens of God's curse as are unspeakable.

O Son of God, grace was in all thy tears; grace came bubbling out of thy side with thy blood; grace came forth with every word of thy sweet mouth; grace came out where the whip smote thee, where the thorns pricked thee, where the nails and spear pierced thee. O blessed Son of God, here is grace indeed! unsearchable riches of grace! unthought of riches of grace! grace to make angels wonder, grace to make sinners happy, grace to astonish devils!

And what will become of them that trample under foot this Son of God?

Christ is the desire of nations, the joy of angels, the delight of the Father. What solace then must that soul be filled with, that hath the possession of him to all eternity!

Who can tell how many heart-pleasing thoughts Christ had of us before the world began? Who can tell how much he then was delighted in that being we had in his affections, as also in the consideration of our beings, believings, and being with him afterwards?

Christ was never so joyful in all his life, that we read of, as when his sufferings grew near; then he takes the sacrament of his body and blood into his own hands, and with thanksgiving bestows it among his disciples; then he sings a hymn, then he rejoices, then he comes with a "Lo, I come." O the heart, the great heart that Jesus had for us to do us good! He did it with all the desire of his soul.

When a man shall not only design me a purse of gold, but shall venture his life to bring it to me, this is grace indeed. But, alas, what are a thousand such short comparisons to the unsearchable love of Christ?

Christ Jesus has bags of mercy that were never yet broken up or unsealed. Hence it is said, he has goodness laid up; things reserved in heaven for his. And if he breaks up one of these bags, who can tell what he can do?

It is not exaltation, nor a crown, nor a kingdom, nor a throne that shall make Christ neglect his poor ones on earth; yea, because he is exalted and on the throne, therefore it is that such a river of life, with its golden streams,

proceeds with us. And it shall proceed, to be far higher than ever were the swellings of Jordan. Rev. 22 : 1.

How the brave sun doth peep up from beneath,
Shows us his golden face, doth on us breathe;
Yea, he doth compass us around with glories
Whilst he ascends up to his highest stories,
Where he his banner over us displays
And gives us light to see our works and ways.

Nor are we now, as at the peep of light,
To question is it day or is it night;
The night is gone, the shadow 's fled away,
And now we are most certain that 'tis day.

And thus it is when Jesus shows his face,
And doth assure us of his love and grace.

This makes Christ precious, if I consider how he did deliver me: it was, 1, with his life, his blood; it cost him tears, groans, agony, separation from God; to do it, he endured his Father's wrath, bare his Father's curse, and died thousands of deaths at once.

2. He did this while I was his enemy, without my desires, without my knowledge, without my deserts; he did it unawares to me.

3. He did it freely, cheerfully, yea, he longed to die for me; yea, heaven would not hold him for the love he had to my salvation, which also he has effectually accomplished for me at Jerusalem.

Honorable Jesus! precious Jesus! loving Jesus! Jonathan's kindness captivated David, and made him precious in his eyes for ever. "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan," said he; "very pleasant hast thou been to me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." Why, what had Jonathan done? Oh, he had delivered David from the wrath of Saul. But how much more should He be precious to me, who hath saved me from death and hell—who hath delivered me from the wrath of

God? "The love of Christ constraineth us." Nothing will so edge the spirit of a Christian as, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." This makes the heavens themselves ring with joy and shouting.

THE DAY, BEFORE THE SUN-RISING.

But all this while, where 's he whose golden rays
Drive night away, and beautify our days?
Where 's he whose goodly face doth warm and heal,
And show us what the darksome nights conceal?
Where 's he that thaws our ice, drives cold away?
Let 's have him, or we care not for the day.
Thus 'tis with those who are possessèd of grace;
There 's naught to them like the Redeemer's face.

Oh thou loving one, Oh thou blessed one, thou deservest to have me; thou hast bought me; thou deservest to have me all; thou hast paid for me ten thousand times more than I am worth!

O you that are upon this march [to hell,] I beseech you, consider a little. What, shall Christ become a servant for you, and will you be drudges for the devil? Shall Christ covenant with God for the salvation of sinners, and shall sinners covenant with hell, death, and the devil, for the damnation of their souls? Shall Christ come down from heaven to earth to declare this to sinners; and shall sinners stop their ears against these good tidings? Will you not hear the errand of Christ, although he telleth you tidings of peace and salvation? How if he had come, having taken a command from his Father to damn you and to send you to dwell with devils in hell? Sinners, hear this message, John 3 : 16, 17, etc.; he speaketh no harm, his words are eternal life; all men that give ear unto them have eternal advantage by them—advantage, I say, that never hath an end.

Besides, do but consider these two things; they may have some sway upon thy soul.

1. When he came on his message, he came with tears in his eyes, and did even weepingly tender the terms of reconciliation to them—I say, with tears in his eyes. And when he came near the city with the message of peace, beholding the hardness of their hearts, he wept over it, and took up a lamentation over it, because he saw they rejected his mercy, which was tidings of peace. I say, wilt thou then slight a weeping Jesus, one that so loveth the soul that rather than he will lose thee, he will with tears persuade thee?

2. Not only so, but also when he came, he came all on a gore of blood, to proffer mercy to thee, to show thee still how dearly he did love thee; as if he had said, "Sinner, here is mercy for thee; but behold my bloody sweat, my bloody wounds, my accursed death; behold, and see what danger I have gone through to come unto thy soul. I am come indeed unto thee, and do bring thee tidings of salvation, but it cost me my heart's blood before I could come at thee, to give thee the fruits of my everlasting love."

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

Many there are who, in the day of grace and mercy, despise those things which are indeed the birthright to heaven, who yet when the declining days appear will cry as loud as Esau, "Lord, Lord, open to us;" but then, as Isaac would not repent, no more will God the Father, but will say, "I have blessed these, yea, and they shall be blessed; but as for you, Depart, you are workers of iniquity."

When I had thus considered these scriptures and found that thus to understand them was not against, but according to the Scriptures, this still added further to my encouragement and comfort, and also gave a great blow to that objection—to wit, that the Scriptures could not agree in the salvation of my soul.

And now remained only the hinder part of the tem-

pest, for the thunder was gone beyond me, only some drops did still remain that now and then would fall upon me; but because my former frights and anguish were very sore and deep, therefore it oft befell me still, as it befalleth those that have been seared with the fire, I thought every voice was, "Fire, fire!" Every little touch would hurt my tender conscience.

But one day, as I was passing into the field, and that too with some dashes on my conscience, fearing lest yet all was not right, suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul: "Thy righteousness is in heaven;" and methought withal I saw with the eyes of my soul Jesus Christ at God's right hand—there, I say, as my righteousness; so that wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say to me, he wanted my righteousness, for that was just before him. I also saw, moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse; for my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed; I was loosed from my afflictions and irons; my temptations also fled away; so that from that time those dreadful scriptures* of God left off to trouble me: now went I also home rejoicing, for the grace and love of God. So when I came home, I looked to see if I could find that sentence, "Thy righteousness is in heaven," but could not find such a saying; wherefore my heart began to sink again, only that was brought to my remembrance, "He is made unto us of God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." By this word I saw the other sentence true.

For by this scripture I saw that the man Christ Jesus, as he is distinct from us as touching his bodily presence, so he is our righteousness and sanctification before God. Here, therefore, I lived for some time very sweetly at peace

* Numb. 15:30; Jer. 7:16; Heb. 10:31; 12:17.

with God through Christ. Oh, methought, Christ! Christ! there was nothing but Christ that was before my eyes. I was now not only for looking upon this and the other benefits of Christ apart, as of his blood, burial, or resurrection, but considering him as a whole Christ—as he in whom all these, and all his other virtues, relations, offices, and operations met together, and that he sat on the right hand of God in heaven.

Further, the Lord did also lead me into the mystery of the union with the Son of God—that I was joined to him, and that I was flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone; and now was that a sweet word to me in Eph. 5:30. By this also was my faith in him as my righteousness, the more confirmed in me; for if he and I were one, then his righteousness was mine, his merits mine, his victory also mine. Now, I could see myself in heaven and earth at once: in heaven, by my Christ, by my Head, by my Righteousness and Life, though on earth by body or person.

Let divine and infinite justice turn itself which way it will, it finds One that can tell how to match it. For if it say, "I will require the satisfaction of man," there is a man to satisfy its cry; and if it say, "But I am an infinite God, and must and will have an infinite satisfaction," here is One also that is infinite, even "fellow" with God; fellow in his essence and being; fellow in his power and strength; fellow in his wisdom; fellow in his mercy and grace, together with the rest of the attributes of God. So that, let justice turn itself which way it will, here is a complete person and a complete satisfaction.

"The law," sayst thou, "must be obeyed." I answer, "Christ Jesus has done that in his own person, and justified me thereby; and for my part, I will not labor now to fulfil the law for justification, lest I should undervalue the merits of the man Christ Jesus, and what he has done

without me; and yet will I labor to fulfil, if it were possible, ten thousand laws, if there were so many. And Oh, let it be out of love to my sweet Lord Jesus; for the love of Christ constraineth me."

Though no man can be justified by the works of the law, yet unless the righteousness and holiness by which they attempt to enter into this kingdom be justified by the law, it is in vain once to think of entering in at this strait gate. Now, the law justifieth not, but upon the account of Christ's righteousness; if therefore thou be not indeed found in that righteousness, thou wilt find the law lie just in the passage into heaven to keep thee out.

CHRIST A COMPLETE SAVIOUR.

"This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6 : 39.

The Father therefore, in giving them to him to save them, must needs declare unto us the following things:

1. That he is *able* to answer this design of God to save them to the uttermost sin, the uttermost temptation. Hence he is said to "lay help on one that is mighty," mighty to save. Sin is strong. Satan is also strong, death and the grave are strong, and so is the curse of the law; therefore it follows, that this Jesus must needs be by God the Father accounted almighty, in that he hath given his elect to him to save them from these, and that in despite of all their force and power. And he gave us testimony of this his might, when he was employed in that part of our deliverance that called for a declaration of it. He abolished death; he destroyed him that had the power of death; he was the destruction of the grave; he hath finished sin, and made an end of it; he hath vanquished the curse of the law, nailed it to his cross, triumphed over them upon his cross, and made a show of these things openly. Yea,

and even now, as a sign of his triumph and conquest, he is alive from the dead, and hath the keys of death and hell in his own keeping.

2. The Father's giving them to him to save them, declares unto us that he is and will be *faithful* in his office of Mediator, and that therefore they shall be secured from the fruit and wages of their sins, which is eternal damnation. And of this the Son hath already given a proof; for when the time was come that his blood was by divine justice required for their redemption, washing, and cleansing, he as freely poured it out of his heart as if it had been water out of a vessel; not sticking to part with his own life, that the life which was laid up for his people in heaven might not fail to be bestowed upon them.

3. The Father's giving of them to him to save them, declares that he is and will be *gentle and patient* towards them under all their provocations and miscarriages. It is not to be imagined, the trials and provocations that the Son of God hath all along had with these people that have been given to him to save. Indeed, he is said to be *a tried stone;* for he has been tried not only by the devil, guilt of sin, death, and the curse of the law, but also by his people's ignorance, unruliness, falls into sin, and declining to errors in life and doctrine. Were we but capable of seeing how this Lord Jesus has been tried, even by his people, ever since there was one of them in the world, we should be amazed at his patience and gentle carriages to them. It is said indeed, "The Lord is very pitiful, slow to anger, and of great mercy." And indeed, if he had not been so, he could never have endured their manners as he has done, from Adam hitherto. Therefore are his pity and bowels towards his church preferred above the pity and bowels of a mother towards her child. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee, saith the Lord."

God did once give Moses, as Christ's servant, a handful of his people to carry them in his bosom, but no further than from Egypt to Canaan; and this Moses, as is said of him by the Holy Ghost, was the meekest man that was then to be found upon the earth. God gave them to Moses that he might carry them in his bosom, that he might show gentleness and patience towards them, under all the provocations wherewith they would provoke him from that time till he had brought them to their land. But he failed in the work; he could not exercise it, because he had not that sufficiency of patience towards them. But now it is said of the person speaking in the text, that "he shall gather his lambs with his arm, shall carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead them that are with young."

4. The Father's giving them to him to save them, declares that he hath a *sufficiency of wisdom* to wage with all those difficulties that would attend him in his bringing his sons and daughters unto glory. He hath made him to us to be wisdom; yea, he is called Wisdom itself. And God saith, moreover, that he "shall deal prudently." And indeed, he that shall take upon him to be the Saviour of the people, had need be wise, because their adversaries are subtle above any. Here they are to encounter the serpent, who for his subtlety outwitted our father and mother when their wisdom was at highest. But if we talk of wisdom, our Jesus is wise, wiser than Solomon, wiser than all men, wiser than all angels; he is even "the wisdom of God." And hence it is that he turneth sins, temptations, persecutions, falls, and all things, for good unto his people.

I do not doubt but there is virtue enough in the blood of Christ, would God Almighty so apply it, to save the souls of the whole world. But it is the blood of Christ, his own blood, and he may do what he will with his own

It is also the blood of God, and he also may restrain its merits, or apply it as he sees good. But the coming soul, he shall find and feel the virtue thereof, even the soul that comes to God by Christ, for he is the man concerned in its worth.

There is sufficiency of merit in Christ to save a thousand times as many more as are like to be saved by him.

No man needs at all to go about to come at life and peace and rest: let him come directly from sin to grace, from Satan to Jesus Christ.

The cross, it stands and hath stood from the beginning as a way-mark to the kingdom of heaven. Art thou inquiring the way to heaven? Why, I tell thee Christ is the way; into him thou must get, into his righteousness to be justified; and if thou art in him, thou wilt presently see the cross: thou must go close by it, thou must touch it, nay, thou must take it up, or else thou wilt quickly go out of the way that leads to heaven, and turn up some of those crooked lanes that lead down to the chambers of death.

Many there be that begin with grace and end with works, and think that is the only way. Indeed, works will save from temporal punishments, when their imperfections are purged from them by the intercession of Christ; but to be saved and brought to glory, to be carried through this dangerous world from my first moving after Christ until I set foot within the gates of paradise, this is the work of my Mediator, of my High-priest and Intercessor. It is he that fetches us again when we are run away; it is he that lifts us up when the devil and sin have thrown us down; it is he that quickens us when we grow cold; it is he that comforts us when we despair; it is he that obtains fresh

pardon when we have contracted sin, and that purges our consciences when they are laden with guilt. I know that rewards do wait for them in heaven, that believe in Christ, and shall do well on earth; but this is not a reward of merit, but of grace. We are saved by Christ, brought to glory by Christ, and all our works are no other ways made acceptable to God but by the person and personal excellencies and works of Christ; therefore, whatever the jewels are, and the bracelets and the pearls, that thou shalt be adorned with as a reward of service done for God in the world, for them thou must thank Christ, and before all confess that he was the meritorious cause thereof.

Christ must be helpful to thee every way, or he will be helpful to thee no way; thou must enter in by every whit of Christ, or thou shalt enter in by never a whit of him. Wherefore look not to have him thy Saviour, if thou take him not for King and Prophet; nay, thou shalt not have him in any one, if thou dost not take him in every one of these.

Christ shall bear the glory of our salvation from sin, preservation in the midst of all temptations, and of our going to glory; also he shall bear the glory of our labor in the gospel, of our gifts and abilities, of making our work and labor effectual to the saving of sinners, that in all things he might have the preëminence.

If you have indeed laid Christ, God-man, for your foundation, then you do lay the hope of your felicity and joy on this, that the Son of Mary is now absent from his children in his person and humanity, making intercession for them and for thee in the presence of his Father. 2 Cor. 5 : 6.

And the reason that thou canst rejoice hereat is, because thou hast not only heard of it with thine ear, but dost enjoy the sweet hope and faith of it in thy heart.

which hope and faith are begotten by the Spirit of Christ, which Spirit dwelleth in thee if thou be a believer, and showeth those things to thee to be the only things.

And God having shown thee these things thus within thee, by the Spirit that dwells in thee, thou hast mighty encouragement to hope for the glory that shall be revealed at the coming again of the man Christ Jesus; of which glory thou hast also greater ground to hope for a share, because that Spirit which alone is able to discover to thee the truth of these things, is given to thee of God as the first fruits of that glory which is hereafter to be revealed—being obtained for thee by the man Christ Jesus' death on Calvary, and by his blood that was shed there, together with his resurrection from the dead out of the grave where they had laid him.

Also, thou believest that he is gone away from thee in the same body which was hanged on the cross, to take possession of that glory which thou, through his obedience, shalt at his the very same man's return from heaven the second time, have bestowed upon thee, he having all this while prepared and preserved it for thee; as he saith himself, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Again, if thou hast laid Christ, God-man, for thy foundation, though thou hast the Spirit of this man Christ within thee, yet thou dost not look that justification should be wrought out for thee by that Spirit of Christ that dwells within thee; for thou knowest that salvation is already obtained for thee by the man Christ Jesus without thee, and is witnessed to thee by his Spirit which dwells within thee. And thus much doth this man Christ Jesus testify unto us, where he says, "He shall glorify me," saith the Son of Mary. But how? Why, "he shall take of mine"—what I have done and am doing in the presence of the Father—"and shall show it unto you." John 16 : 14.

CHRIST NOT A SAVIOUR BY HIS EXAMPLE.

A third thing you mention is, that "the Son of God taught men their duty by his own example, and did himself perform what he required of them; and that himself did tread before us every step of that which he hath told us leadeth to eternal life."

ANSWER. Now we are come to the point, namely, that "the way to eternal life is, first of all, to take Christ for our example, treading his steps." And the reason, if it be true, is weighty; for "he hath trod every step before us which he hath told us leads to eternal life."

"Every step." Therefore he went to heaven by virtue of an imputative righteousness; for this is one of our steps thither.

"Every step." Then he must go thither by faith in his own blood for pardon of sin; for this is another of our steps thither.

"Every step." Then he must go thither by virtue of his own intercession at the right hand of God before he came thither; for this is one of our steps thither.

"Every step." Then he must come to God and ask mercy for some great wickedness which he had committed; for this is also one of our steps thither.

But again, we will consider it the other way.

"Every step." Then we cannot come to heaven before we first be made accursed of God; for so was he before he came thither.

"Every step." Then we must first make our body and soul an offering for the sin of others; for this did he before he came thither.

"Every step." Then we must go to heaven for the sake of our own righteousness; for that was one of his steps thither.

O, sir, what will thy gallant, generous mind do here? Indeed, you talk of his being an expiatory sacrifice for us, but you put no more trust to that than to baptism or the

Lord's supper; counting that with the other two but things indifferent in themselves.

You add again, that "this Son of God being raised from the dead and ascended to heaven, is our high-priest there." But you talk not at all of his sprinkling the mercy-seat with his blood, but clap upon him the heathens' demons, negotiating the affairs of men with the supreme God, and so wrap up* with a testification that it is needless to enlarge on the point.

What man that ever had read or assented to the gospel, but would have spoken more honorably of Christ than you have done? His sacrifice must be stepped over; his intercession is needless to be enlarged upon. But when it falleth in your way to talk of your human nature, of the dictates of the first principles of morals within you, and of your generous mind to follow it, Oh what need there is now of amplifying, enlarging, and pressing it on men's consciences, as if that poor heathenish pagan principle was the very Spirit of God within us, and as if righteousness done by that was that and that only that would or could fling heaven's gates off the hinges.

Yea, a little after you tell us that "the doctrine of sending the Holy Ghost was to move and excite us to our duty, and to assist, cheer, and comfort us in the performance of it;" still meaning our close adhering, by the purity of our human nature, to the dictates of the law as written in our hearts as men; which is as false as God is true.

For the Holy Ghost is sent into our hearts, not to excite us to a compliance with our old and wind-shaken excellencies that came into the world with us, but to write new laws in our hearts, even the law of faith, the word of faith and of grace, and the doctrine of remission of sins through the blood of the Lamb of God, that holiness might flow from thence.

* That is, dismiss the subject.

CHRIST A TEACHER.

At this time I sat under the ministry of holy Mr. Gifford, whose doctrine, by God's grace, was much for my stability. This man made it much his business to deliver the people of God from all those hard and unsound tests that by nature we are prone to. He would bid us take special heed that we took not up any truth upon trust, as from this or that or any other man or men; but cry mightily to God that he would convince us of the reality thereof, and set us down therein by his own Spirit in the holy word; "for," said he, "if you do otherwise, when temptation comes strongly upon you, you not having received them with evidence from heaven, will find you want that help and strength now to resist, that once you thought you had."

This was as seasonable to my soul as the former and latter rain in their season, for I had found, and that by sad experience, the truth of these his words; for I had felt that no man, especially when tempted by the devil, "can say that Jesus Christ is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

But O now, how was my soul led from truth to truth by God; even from the birth and cradle of the Son of God, to his ascension and second coming from heaven to judge the world.

Once I was troubled to know whether the Lord Jesus was a man as well as God, and God as well as man; and truly, in those days, let men say what they would, unless I had it with evidence from heaven, all was nothing to me. Well, I was much troubled about this point, and could not tell how to be resolved; at last, that in Rev. 5:6 came into my mind: "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb." "In the midst of the throne"—thought I, there is the godhead; "in the midst of the elders"—there is his manhood: but Oh, methought this did glister; it was a goodly touch, and gave me sweet satisfaction.

That other scripture also did help me much in this: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

O friends, cry to God to reveal Jesus Christ unto you; there is none teacheth like him.

It would be long to tell you in particular how God did set me down in all the things of Christ, and how he did, that he might do so, lead me into his words; yea, and also how he did open them unto me, and make them shine before me, and cause them to dwell with me, talk with me, and comfort me over and over, both of his own being and the being of his Son and Spirit, and word and gospel.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

We never read that Jesus Christ was more cheerful in all his life on earth, than when he was going to lay down his life for his enemies; now he thanked God, now he sang.

Christ died and endured the wages of sin, and that without an intercessor, without one between God and him. He grappled immediately with the eternal justice of God, who inflicted on him death, the wages of sin; there was no man to hold off the hand of God; justice had his full blow at him, and made him a curse for sin.

A second thing that demonstrates that Christ died the cursed death for sin, is the frame of spirit that he was in at the time he was to be taken. Never was poor mortal so beset with the apprehensions of approaching death as was this Lord Jesus Christ; amazement beyond measure, sorrow that exceeded seized upon his soul: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. And he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy." Add to this that Jesus Christ was better able to grapple with death, even alone, than the whole world joined all together. 1. He

was anointed with the Spirit without measure. 2. He had all grace perfect in him. 3. Never had any so much of his Father's love as he. 4. Never one so harmless and without sin as he, and consequently never man had so good a conscience as he. 5. Never one prepared such a stock of good works to bear him company at the hour of death as he. 6. Never one had greater assurance of being with the Father eternally in the heavens than he. And yet, behold, when he comes to die, how weak is he, how amazed at death, how heavy, how exceeding sorrowful! and, I say, no cause assigned but the approach of death.

Alas, how often is it seen that we poor sinners can laugh at destruction when it cometh; yea, and rejoice exceedingly when we find the grave, looking upon death as a part of our portion, yea, as that which will be a means of our present relief and help. 1 Cor. 3 : 22.

This Jesus could not do, considered as dying for our sin; but the nearer death, the more heavy and oppressed with the thoughts of the revenging hand of God; wherefore he falls into an agony and sweats—not after the common rate, as we do when death is severing body and soul: "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

What should be the reason but that death assaulted him with his sting? If Jesus Christ had been to die for his virtues only, doubtless he would have borne it lightly.

How have the martyrs despised death, having peace with God by Jesus Christ, scorning the most cruel torments that men and hell could devise and invent! but Jesus Christ could not do so, as he was a sacrifice for sin; he died for us, he was made a curse for us. O, my brethren, Christ died many deaths at once; he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.

It was because of sin, the sin that was put into the death he died, and the curse of God that was due to sin, that that death was so bitter to Jesus Christ; it is Christ

that died. The apostle speaks as if never any died but Christ; nor indeed did there, so wonderful a death as he. Death, considered simply as a deprivation of natural life, could not have these effects in a person personally more righteous than an angel; yea, even carnal wicked men, not awakened in their conscience, how securely they can die! It must therefore be concluded that the sorrows and agony of Jesus Christ came from a higher cause, even from the curse of God that was now approaching for sin.

At last they condemn him to death, even to the death of the cross, where they hang him up by wounds made through his hands and feet, between the earth and the heavens; where he hanged for the space of six hours. No God yet appears for his help. While he hangs there some rail at him, others wag their heads, others tauntingly say, "He saved others, himself he cannot save." Some divide his raiment, casting lots for his raiment before his face; others mockingly bid him come down from the cross; and when he desires succor, they give him vinegar to drink. No God yet appears for his help.

Now the earth quakes, the rocks are rent, the sun becomes black, and Jesus still cries out, that he was forsaken of God; and presently boweth his head and dies.

And for all this there is no cause assigned from God, but sin. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed."

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

You shall have the testimony of the holy angels by the Scriptures, to the resurrection of the Son of God. And first, in Mark 16 : 3–7, the words are these:

"And they said among themselves, Who shall roll away the stone?" They had a good mind to see their Lord; but they could not, as they thought, get away the stone which covered the mouth of the sepulchre. "And when they

had looked," that is, towards the sepulchre, "they saw the stone rolled away, for it was great; and entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man," that is, an angel, "sitting on the right side, clothed with a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not afraid," you have no cause for it; "you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified; he is not here, he is risen: behold the place where they laid him." What scripture can be plainer spoken than this? Here is an angel of the Lord ready to satisfy the disciples of Jesus that he was risen from the dead. And lest they should think it was not the right Jesus he spoke of, Yes, saith he, it is the same Jesus that you mean; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, do you not? Why, "he is risen, he is not here." But do you speak seriously and in good earnest? Yea, surely; if you will not believe me, "behold the place where they laid him." This scripture is very clear to our purpose.

But again, in Matt. 28: 3–7, there is an angel as before bearing witness of the resurrection of Jesus. "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto them," the women who came to seek Jesus, "Fear you not; but let them that seek to keep the Lord in his grave fear if they will, for you have no ground of fear who seek the Jesus that was crucified: he is not here, he is risen; he cannot be here in body, and risen too: if you will not believe me, come, see where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee, there shall you see him" But shall we be sure of it? "Yea," saith the angel; "lo, it is I that have told you." See how plainly this scripture also doth testify of Christ's resurrection. "Here," saith the angel, "you seek a Saviour, and none will content you but he, even the same that was crucified: well, you shall have him, but he is not here." Why, where is

he then? "He is risen from the dead." But are you sure it is the same that we look for? "Yea, it is the same that was crucified." But where shall we find him? Why, "he goeth before you into Galilee, where he used to be in his lifetime, before he was crucified. And that you might be sure of it there to find him, know that he is an angel of God that has told you."

THE GLORIFICATION OF CHRIST.

For God to adorn his Son with all this glory in his ascension, thus to make him ride conqueror up into the clouds, thus to go up with sound of trumpet, with shout of angels and with songs of praises, and let me add, to be accompanied also with those that rose from the dead after his resurrection, who were the very price of his blood—this does greatly demonstrate that Jesus Christ, by what he has done has paid a full price to God for the souls of sinners, and obtained eternal redemption for them: he had not else rode thus in triumph to heaven.

Consider those glorious circumstances that accompany his approach to the gates of the everlasting habitation. The everlasting gates are set, yea, bid stand open: "Be ye open, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." The King of glory is Jesus Christ, and the words are a prophecy of his glorious ascending into the heavens, when he went up as the High-priest of the church, to carry the price of his blood into the holiest of all.

THE OFFICES OF CHRIST.

Christ as a Saviour is not divided. He that hath him not in all, shall have him in none at all of his offices in a saving manner.

CHRIST AN INTERCESSOR.

Study the priesthood, the high-priesthood of Jesus Christ, both the first and second part of it. The first part was that

when he offered up himself without the gate, when he bore our sins in his own body on the tree.

The second part is that which he executes there whither he is now gone, even into heaven itself, where the throne of grace is. I say, study what Christ has done and is doing. Oh, what is he doing now? He is sprinkling his blood, with his priestly robes on, before the throne of grace. That is too little thought on by the saints of God: "We have such a High-priest, who is set down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man." Busy thyself, fellow-Christian, about this blessed office of Christ. It is full of good, it is full of sweet, it is full of heaven, it is full of relief and succor for the tempted and dejected.

The priestly office of Christ is the first and great thing that is presented to us in the gospel: namely, how he died for our sins, and gave himself to the cross, that the blessing of Abraham might come upon us through him. But now because this priestly office of his is divided into two parts, and because one of them, to wit, this of his intercession, is to be accomplished for us within the veil, therefore—as we say among men, out of sight, out of mind—he is too much as to this forgotten by us. We satisfy ourselves with the slaying of the sacrifice; we look not after our Aaron as he goes into the holiest, there to sprinkle the mercy-seat with blood upon our account.

But since his dying is his laying down his price, and his intercession the urging and managing the worthiness of it in the presence of God against Satan, there is glory to be found therein, and we should look after him into the holy place. The second part of the work of the high-priests under the law, had great glory and sanctity put upon it. Forasmuch as the holy garments were provided for him to officiate in within the veil, also it was there that

the altar stood on which he offered incense. Also there were the mercy-seat and the cherubim of glory, which were figures of the angels, that love to be continually looking and prying into the management of this second part of the priesthood of Christ in the presence of God. For although themselves are not the persons so immediately concerned therein as we, yet the management of it, I say, is with so much grace and glory, and wisdom and effectualness, that it is a heaven to the angels to see it. O, to enjoy the odorous scent and sweet memorial, the heart-refreshing perfumes that ascend continually from the mercy-seat to the throne where God is, and also to behold how effectual it is to the end for which it is designed, is glorious; and he that is not somewhat let into this by the grace of God, there is a great thing lacking to his faith, and he misseth of many a sweet bit that he might otherwise enjoy. Wherefore, I say, be exhorted to the study of this part of Christ's work in the managing of our salvation for us.

They who are justified by the blood of Christ, should still look to him for the remaining part of their salvation; and let them look for it with confidence, for it is in a faithful hand. And for thy encouragement to look and hope for the completing of thy salvation in glory, let me present thee with a few things.

1. The hardest or worst part of the work of thy Saviour is over: his bloody work, his bearing thy sin and curse, his loss of the light of his Father's face for a time. His dying upon the cursed tree, that was the worst, the sorest, the hardest, and most difficult part of the work of redemption; and yet this he did willingly, cheerfully, and without thy desires; yea, this he did, as considering those for whom he did it in a state of rebellion and enmity to him.

2. Consider also that he has made a beginning with thy soul to reconcile thee to God, and to that end has be-

stowed his justice upon thee, put his Spirit within thee, and begun to make the unwieldable mountain and rock, thy heart, to turn towards him and desire after him, to believe in him and rejoice in him.

3. Consider also that some comfortable pledges of his love thou hast already received; namely, as to feel the sweetness of his love, as to see the light of his countenance, as to be made to know his power in raising thee when thou wast down, and how he has made thee to stand while hell has been pushing at thee utterly to overthrow thee.

4. Thou mayst consider also, that what remains behind of the work of thy salvation in his hands, as it is the most easy part, is so the most comfortable, and that part which will more immediately issue in his glory; and therefore he will mind it.

5. That which is behind is also more safe in his hand than if it was in thine own. He is wise, he is powerful, he is faithful, and therefore will manage that part that is lacking to our salvation well, until he has completed it. It is his love to thee has made him that he putteth no trust in thee: he knows that he can himself bring thee to his kingdom most surely, and therefore has not left that work to thee, no, not any part thereof.

Live in hope, then, in a lively hope, that since Christ is risen from the dead he lives to make intercession for thee; and that thou shalt reap the blessed benefit of this twofold salvation that is wrought and that is working out for thee by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Every believer may say, Christ did not only die and rise again, but he ascended into heaven to take possession thereof for me, to prepare a place for me. He standeth there in the second part of his suretyship to bring me safe thither, and to present me in a glorious manner, "not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." He is there-

fore exercising his priestly office for me, pleading the perfection of his own righteousness and the virtue of his blood.

He is there ready to answer the accusations of the law, the devil, and sin, for me. Here a believer may through faith look the devil in the face and rejoice, saying, "O Satan, I have a precious Jesus, a soul-comforting Jesus, a sin-pardoning Jesus." Here he may listen to the thunders of the law, and yet not be daunted. He may say, "O law, thou mayest roar against sin, but thou canst not reach me; thou mayest curse and condemn, but not my soul; for I have a righteous Jesus, a holy Jesus, a soul-saving Jesus; and he hath delivered me from thy threats, thy curses, and thy condemnation. I am brought into another covenant, under better promises of life and salvation, freely to comfort me without my merit, through the blood of Jesus; therefore though thou layest my sins to my charge and provest me guilty, yet so long as Christ hath brought in everlasting righteousness and given it to me, I shall not fear thy threats. My Christ is all, hath done all, and will deliver me from thine accusations." Thus also thou mayest say, when death assaulteth thee, "O death, where is thy sting? Thou canst not devour; I have comfort through Jesus Christ, who hath taken thee captive and taken away thy strength; he hath pierced thy heart and let out all thy soul-destroying poison. Though I see thee, I am not afraid of thee; though I feel thee, I am not daunted; for thou hast lost thy sting in the side of the Lord Jesus, through whom I overcome thee. Also, O Satan, though I hear thee make a hellish noise, and though thou threaten me highly, yet my soul shall triumph over thee so long as Christ is alive and can be heard in heaven—so long as he hath broken thy head and won the field—so long as thou art in prison and canst not have thy desire. When I hear thy voice, my thoughts are turned to Christ my Saviour; I hearken to what he will say, for he will speak comfort: he

hath gotten the victory and doth give me the crown, and causeth me to triumph through his most glorious conquest.

"And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as it had been slain." Rev. 5:6. That in the midst of the throne is our sacrifice, with the very marks of his death upon him, showing to God that sitteth upon the throne the holes of the thorns, of the nails, of the spear; and how he was disfigured with blows and blood when at his command he gave himself a ransom for his people; for it cannot be imagined that either the exaltation or glorification of the body of Jesus Christ should make him forget the day in which he died the death for our sins; especially since that which puts worth into his whole intercession is the death he died, and the blood he shed upon the cross for our trespasses.

Since Christ is an intercessor, I infer that believers should not rest at the cross for comfort: justification they should look for there; but being justified by his blood, they should ascend up after him to his throne. At the cross you will see him in his sorrows and humiliations, in his tears and blood; but follow him to where he is now, and then you shall see him in his robes, in his priestly robes, and with his golden girdle about him. There you shall see him wearing the breastplate of judgment, and with all your names written upon his heart. Then you shall perceive that the whole family in heaven and earth is named of him, and how he prevails with God the Father of mercies for you. Stand still awhile and listen, yea, enter with boldness unto the holiest, and see your Jesus as he now appears in the presence of God for you; what work he makes against the devil and sin, and death and hell, for you. Ah, it is brave following of Jesus Christ to the holiest: the veil is rent; you may see with open face as in a glass the glory of the Lord.

This then is our High-priest; this is intercession—these the benefits of it. It lies in our part to improve it; and wisdom to do so—*that* also comes from the mercy-seat or throne of grace where he, even our High-priest, ever liveth to make intercession for us. To whom be glory for ever and ever.

CHRIST AN ADVOCATE.

"We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." This consideration will yield relief, when by Satan's abuse of some other of the offices of Christ, thy faith is discouraged and made afraid. Christ, as a prophet, pronounces many a dreadful sentence against sin; and Christ, as a king, is of power to execute them: and Satan, as an enemy, has subtlety enough to abuse both these to the almost utter overthrow of the faith of the children of God.

This consideration will help thee to put by that vizor* wherewith Christ by Satan is misrepresented to thee, to the weakening and affrighting thee. There is nothing more common among saints, than thus to be wronged by Satan; for he will labor to fetch fire out of the offices of Christ to burn us: so to present him to us with so dreadful and so ireful a countenance, that a man in temptation and under guilt shall hardly be able to lift up his face to God.

But now, to think really that he is my Advocate, this heals all. Put a vizor upon the face of a father, and it may perhaps for a while fright the child; but let the father speak, let him speak in his own fatherly dialect to the child, and the vizor is gone, if not from the father's face, yet from the child's mind; yea, the child, notwithstanding that vizor, will adventure to creep into its father's bosom.

Why, thus it is with the saints when Satan deludes and abuses them by disfiguring the countenance of Christ

* That is, mask.

to their view: let them but hear their Lord speak in his own natural dialect—and he doth so indeed when we hear him speak as an advocate—and their minds are calmed, their thoughts settled, their guilt vanished, and their faith revived.

Is Christ Jesus the Lord my advocate with the Father? Then awake, my faith, and shake thyself like a giant; stir up thyself and be not faint: Christ is the advocate of his people; and as for sin, which is one great stumble to thy actings, O my faith, Christ has not only died for that as a sacrifice, nor only carried his sacrifice unto the Father into the holiest of all, but is there to manage that offering as an advocate, pleading the efficacy and worth thereof before God against the devil for us.

The modest saint is apt to be abashed, to think what a troublesome one he is, and what a make-work he has been in God's house all his days; and let him be filled with holy blushing, but let him not forsake his Advocate.

If thy foot slippeth, if it slippeth greatly, then know thou it will not be long before a bill be in heaven preferred against thee by the accuser of the brethren; wherefore then thou must have recourse to Christ as advocate, to plead before God thy Judge against the devil thine adversary for thee. And as to the badness of thy cause, let nothing move thee save to humility and self-abasement, for Christ is glorified by being concerned for thee; yea, the angels will shout aloud to see him bring thee off. For what greater glory can we conceive Christ to obtain as advocate, than to bring off his people when they have sinned, notwithstanding Satan's so charging of them as he doth?

He gloried when he was going to the cross to die; he went up with a shout and the sound of a trumpet to make

intercession for us; and shall we think that by his being an advocate he receives no additional glory?

Christ, when he pleads as an advocate for his people in the presence of God against Satan, can plead those very weaknesses of his people for which Satan would have them damned, for their relief and advantage. "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" This is part of the plea of our Advocate against Satan, for his servant Joshua, when he said, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan." Zech. 3:2. Now, to be a brand plucked out of the fire, is to be a saint—impatient, weakened, defiled, and made imperfect by sin. This then is the next plea of our goodly Advocate for us: "O Satan, this is a brand plucked out of the fire." As if he should say, "Thou objectest against my servant Joshua, that he is black like a coal, or that the fire of sin at times is still burning in him. And what then? The reason why he is not totally extinct as tow, is not thy pity but my Father's mercy to him. I have plucked him out of the fire, yet not so out but that the smell thereof is yet upon him; and my Father and I, we consider his weakness and pity him; for since he is as a brand pulled out, can it be expected by my Father or me, that he should appear before us as clear and do our biddings as well as if he had never been there? This is a brand plucked out of the fire, and must be considered as such, and must be borne with as such."

His righteousness Christ presents to God for us; and God, for this righteousness' sake, is well pleased that we should be saved, and for it can save us and secure his honor and preserve the law in its sanction.

For Christ, in pleading against Satan as an advocate with the Father for us, appeals to the law itself if he has not done it justice; saying, "Most mighty law, what command of thine have I not fulfilled? What demand of

thine have I not fully answered? Where is that jot or tittle of the law that is able to object against my doings for want of satisfaction?"

Here the law is mute; it speaks not one word by way of the least complaint, but rather testifies of this righteousness that it is good and holy. Rom. 3:22, 23; 5:15–19.

Now then, since Christ did this as a public person, it follows that others must be justified thereby; for that was the end and reason of Christ's taking on him to do the righteousness of the law. Nor can the law object against the equity of this dispensation of heaven; for why might not that God who gave the law its being and its sanction, dispose as he pleases of the righteousness which it commends? Besides, if men be made righteous, they are so; and if by a righteousness which the law commends, how can fault be found with them by the law? Nay, it is "witnessed by the law and the prophets," who consent that it should be "unto all and upon all them that believe," for their justification. Rom. 3:20, 21.

And that the mighty God suffereth the prince of the devils to do with the law what he can against this most wholesome and godly doctrine, it is to show the truth, goodness, and permanency thereof; for this is as if it were said, Devil, do thy worst.

When the law is in the hand of an easy pleader, though the cause that he pleads be good, a crafty opposer may overthrow the right; but here is the salvation of the children in debate, whether it can stand with law and justice: the opposer of this is the devil, his argument against it is the law; he that defends the doctrine is Christ the advocate, who in his plea must justify the justice of God, defend the holiness of the law, and save the sinner from all the arguments, pleas, stops, and demurs that Satan is able to put in against it. And this he must do fairly, righteously, simply, pleading the voice of the self-same law for the justification of the soul that he standeth for, which Satan

pleads against it; for though it is by the new law that our salvation comes, yet by the old law is the new law approved of, and the way of salvation thereby consented to.

VIII. THE HOLY SPIRIT.

It is the Spirit of God, even the Holy Ghost that convinceth us of sin, and so of our damnable state because of sin.

Therefore the Spirit of God, when he worketh in the heart as a spirit of bondage, doeth it by working in us by the law, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Rom. 3:20. And he in this his working is properly called a spirit of bondage; because by the law he shows us that indeed we are in bondage to the law, the devil, and death and damnation.

He is called in his working the spirit of bondage, because he here also holds us—to wit, in this sight and sense of our bondage state—so long as it is meet we should be so held; which to some of the saints is a longer, and to some a shorter time. Paul was held in it three days and three nights, but the jailer and the three thousand, so far as can be gathered, not above an hour; but some in these later times are so held for days and months, if not for years. But I say, let the time be longer or shorter, it is the Spirit of God that holdeth him under this yoke, and it is good that a man should be his time held under it.

Now, as I said, the sinner at first is by the Spirit of God held under this bondage; that is, hath such a discovery of his sin and of his damnation for sin made to him, and also is held so fast under the sense thereof, that it is not in the power of any man, nor yet of the very angels in heaven, to release or set him free, until the Holy Spirit changeth his ministration and comes in the sweet and peaceable tidings

of salvation by Christ in the gospel to his poor dejected and afflicted conscience.

The Spirit loveth to do what it does in private: that man to whom God intendeth to reveal great things, he taketh him aside from the lumber and cumber of this world, and carrieth him away in the solace and contemplation of the things of another world.

This water of life is the very groundwork of life *in* us, though not the groundwork of life *for* us. The groundwork of life *for* us is the passion and merits of Christ; this is that for the sake of which grace is given unto us, as is intimated by the text, Rev. 22 : 1. It proceeds from the throne of God, who is Christ. Christ then having obtained grace for us, must needs be precedent as to his merit, to that grace he hath so obtained. Besides, it is clear that the Spirit and grace come from God through him. Therefore, as to the communication of grace to us, it is the fruit of his merit and purchase.

But I say, *in us* grace is the groundwork of life; for though we may be said before to live virtually in the person of Christ before God, yet we are dead in ourselves, and so must be until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high; for the Spirit is life, and its graces are life, and when that is infused by God from the throne, then we live, and not till then. And hence it is called as before, living water, the water of life, springing up in us into everlasting life. The Spirit then and graces of the Spirit, which is the river here spoken of, is that, and that only, which can cause us to live; that being life to the soul, as the soul is life to the body. All men therefore, as was said afore—though elect, though purchased by the blood of Christ—are dead and must be dead until the Spirit of life from God and his throne shall enter into them; until they shall drink it in by vehement thirst, as the parched ground drinks in the rain.

Now when this living water is received, it takes up its seat in the heart, whence it spreads itself to the awakening of all the powers of the soul. For as in the first creation, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, in order to the putting of that creation into that excellent fashion and harmony which now we behold with our eyes, even so the new creation, to wit, the making of us new to God, is done by the overspreading of the same Spirit also.

As the herb that is planted or seed sown needs watering with continual showers of the mountains, so our graces implanted in us by the Spirit of grace must also be watered by the rain of Heaven. "Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly, thou settest the furrows thereof, thou makest it soft with showers, thou blessest the springing thereof." Hence he says that our graces shall grow. But how? "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine; the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon."

All the warmth that we have in our communion, is the warmth of the Spirit. When a company of saints are gathered together in the name of Christ to perform any spiritual exercise, and their souls are edified warmly and made glad therein, it is because this water, this river of water of life, has, in some of the streams thereof, run into that assembly. Then are Christians like those that drink wine in bowls, merry and glad; for that they have drank into the Spirit, and had their souls refreshed with the sweet gales and strong wine thereof. This is the feast that Isaiah speaks of when he saith, "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things,

a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Isa. 25 : 6. This is called in another place, "The communion of the Holy Ghost." 2 Cor. 13 : 14. Now he warmeth spirits, uniteth spirits, enlighteneth spirits, reviveth, cherisheth, quickeneth, strengtheneth graces; renews assurances, brings old comforts to mind, weakens lusts, emboldeneth and raiseth a spirit of faith, of love, of hope, of prayer, and makes the word a blessing, conference a blessing, meditation a blessing, and duty very delightful to the soul. Without this water of life, communion is weak, flat, cold, dead, fruitless, lifeless; there is nothing seen, felt, heard, or understood, in a spiritual, heart-quickening way. Now ordinances are burdensome, sins strong, faith weak, hearts hard, and the faces of our souls dry, like the dry and parched ground.

This drink also revives us when tempted, when sick, when persecuted, when in the dark, and when we faint for thirst. The life of religion is this water of life; where that runs, where that is received, and where things are done in this spirit, there all things are well—the church thrifty, the soul thrifty, graces thrifty, and all is well.

You that are spiritual, you know what a high and goodly lifting up of heart one small gale of the good Spirit of God will make in your souls; how it will make your lusts to languish, and your souls to love and take pleasure in the Lord that saves you. You know, I say, what a flame of love, and compassion, and self-denial, and endeared affection to God and all saints, it will beget in the soul: "Oh, it is good to be here," saith the gracious heart.

This is the reason why so many are carried away with the errors that are broached in these days, because they have not indeed received the Lord Jesus by the revelation of the Spirit and with power, but by the relation of others only; and so having no other witness to set them down

withal, but the history of the word and the relation of others concerning the truths contained in it, yet not having had the Spirit of the Lord to confirm these things effectually to them, they are carried away with delusions.

IX. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

True justifying faith is said to receive, to embrace, to obey the Son of God as tendered in the gospel; by which expressions is showed both the nature of justifying faith in its actings in point of justification, and also the cause of its being full of good works in the world. A gift is not made mine by my seeing it, or because I know the nature of the thing so given; but it is mine if I receive and embrace it, yea, and as to the point in hand, if I yield myself up to stand and fall by it. Now he that shall not only see but receive, not only know but embrace the Son of God to be justified by him, cannot but bring forth good works; because Christ, who is now received and embraced by faith, leavens and seasons the spirit of this sinner, through his faith, to the making of him so to be. Acts 15 : 9. For faith has joined Christ and the soul together, and being so joined, the soul is one spirit with him: not essentially, but in agreement and oneness of design. Besides, when Christ is truly received and embraced to the justifying of the sinner, in that man's heart he dwells by his word and Spirit through the same faith also. Now Christ by his Spirit and word must needs season the soul he thus dwells in; so then the soul being seasoned, it seasoneth the body and soul, the life and conversation.

If the receiving of a temporal gift naturally tends to the making of us to move our cap and knee, and binds us to be the servant of the giver, shall we think that faith will leave him who by it has received Christ, to be as unconcerned as a stock or stone, or that its utmost excellency is to provoke the soul to a lip-labor, and to give Christ a

few fair words for his pains and grace, and so wrap up the business? No, no; the love of Christ constraineth us thus to judge, that it is but reasonable, since he gave his all for us, that we should give our some for him. 2 Cor. 5 : 14.

We are said to be saved by faith, because by faith we lay hold of, venture upon, and put on Jesus Christ for life: for life, I say, because God having made him the Saviour, has given him life to communicate to sinners; and the life that he communicates to them is the merit of his flesh and blood, which whoso eateth and drinketh by faith hath eternal life, because that flesh and blood have merit sufficient to obtain the favor of God. Yea, it hath done so, that day it was offered through the eternal Spirit a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savor to him. Wherefore God imputeth the righteousness of Christ to him that believeth in him, by which righteousness he is personally justified and saved from that just judgment of the law that was due unto him. John 5 : 26; 6 : 53–57; Eph. 4 : 32; 5 : 2; Rom. 4 : 23–25.

Here let Christians warily distinguish betwixt the meritorious and the instrumental cause of their justification. Christ, with what he has done and suffered, is the meritorious cause of our justification; therefore he is said to be "made unto us of God wisdom and righteousness," and we are said to be "justified by his blood and saved from wrath through him," 1 Cor. 1 : 30; Rom. 5 : 9, 10; for it was his life and blood that was the price of our redemption.

Thou art therefore to make Christ Jesus the object of thy faith for justification; for by his righteousness thy sins must be covered from the sight of the justice of the law. Acts 16 : 31; Matt. 1 : 21.

FAITH THE INSTRUMENTAL CAUSE OF SALVATION.

Faith as the gift of God is not the Saviour, as our act doth merit nothing. Faith was not the cause that God

gave Christ, neither is it the cause why God converts men to Christ; but faith is a gift bestowed upon us by the gracious God, the nature of which is to lay hold on Christ, whom God before did give for a ransom to redeem sinners. This faith hath its nourishment and supplies from the same God who at the first did give it; and is the only instrument through the Spirit that doth keep the soul in a comfortable frame both to do and suffer; for Christ helps the soul to receive comfort from him, when it can get none from itself, bearing up the soul in its progress heavenward. But that it is the first cause of salvation, I deny; or that it is the second, I deny. It is only the instrument or hand that receiveth the benefits that God hath prepared for thee before thou hadst any faith; so that we do nothing for salvation, as men. But if we speak properly, it was God's grace that moved him to give Christ a ransom for sinners, and the same God with the same grace, that doth give to the soul faith to believe and by believing to close in with him whom God out of his love and pity did send into the world to save sinners; so that all the works of the creature are shut out as to justification and life, and men are saved freely by grace.

TRUE AND FALSE FAITH DISTINGUISHED.

There are two sorts of good works; and a man may be shrewdly guessed at with reference to his faith, even by the works that he chooseth to be conversant in.

There are works that cost nothing, and works that are chargeable; and observe it, the unsound faith will choose to itself the most easy works it can find: for example, there is reading, praying, hearing of sermons, baptism, breaking of bread, church-fellowship, preaching, and the like; and there is mortification of lusts, charity, simplicity, and open-heartedness with a liberal hand to the poor, and their like also. Now, the unsound faith picks and chooses, and takes and leaves; but the true faith does not so.

Satan is afraid that men should hear of justification by Christ, lest they should embrace it. But yet if he can prevail with them to keep fingers off, although they do hear and look on and practise lesser things, he can the better bear it; yea, he will labor to make such professors bold to conclude they shall by that kind of faith enjoy Christ, though by that they cannot embrace him nor lay hold of him; for he knows that how far soever a man engages in a profession of Christ with a faith that looks on but cannot receive nor embrace him, that faith will leave him to nothing but mistakes and disappointments at last.

The Son of God was manifest that he might destroy the works of the devil, but these men profess his faith and keep these works alive in the world. 1 John, 3. Shall these pass or such as believe to the saving of the soul? For a man to be content with this kind of faith and to look to go to salvation by it, what to God is a greater provocation?

The devil laugheth here, for he knows he has not lost his vassal by such a faith as this, but that rather he hath made use of the gospel, that glorious word of life, to secure his captive, through his presumption of the right faith, the faster in his shackles.

FAITH AND WORKS.

When I write of justification before God from the dreadful curse of the law, then I must speak of nothing but grace, Christ, the promise, and faith; but when I speak of our justification before men, then I must join to these good works; for grace, Christ, and faith are things invisible, and so not to be seen by another, otherwise than through a life that befits so blessed a gospel as has declared unto us the remission of our sins for the sake of Jesus Christ. He then that would have forgiveness of sins, and so be delivered from the curse of God, must believe in the righteousness and blood of Christ; but he that would show

to his neighbors that he hath truly received this mercy of God, must do it by good works, for all things else to them is but talk; as for example, a tree is known to be what it is, whether of this or that kind, by its fruit. A tree it is without fruit; but so long as it so abideth, there is ministered occasion to doubt what manner of tree it is.

JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION DISTINGUISHED.

A believer is to do nothing for justification, only believe and be saved; though the law be a rule for every one that believes to walk by, it is not for justification. But if you do not put a difference between justification wrought by the Man Christ without, and sanctification wrought by the Spirit of Christ within, teaching believers their duty to their God for his love in giving Christ, you are not able to divide the word aright; but contrariwise, you corrupt the word of God, and cast stumbling-blocks before the people, and will certainly one day most deeply smart for your folly, except you repent.

To those who do believe in Christ aright, and lay him for their foundation: see that you are laborers after a more experimental knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; fly more to his birth, death, blood, resurrection, ascension, and intercession, and fetch refreshing for your souls more and more from him without, through the operation of his Spirit within; and though the fruits of the Spirit be excellent, and to be owned where they are found, yet have a care you take not away the glory of the blood of Christ shed on the cross without the gates of Jerusalem, and give it them; which you will do, if you content yourselves and satisfy your consciences with this—that you find the fruits of the Spirit within you—and do not go for peace and consolation of conscience to the blood of Jesus shed on the cross.

Therefore learn of the saints, or rather of the Spirit, who teaches to sing this song, "Thou art worthy to take the

book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Rev. 5 : 9.

And as for you that cannot yet well endure to think that you should be justified by the blood of the Son of Mary shed on the cross without the gate, I say to you, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they that put their trust in him." Psa. 2 : 12.

The work of the Spirit is to lead us into the sayings of Christ; which, as to our redemption from death, are such as these: "I lay down my life, that you may have life; I give my life a ransom for many; and the bread which I give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

The Holy Ghost breatheth nowhere so as in the ministry of this doctrine; this doctrine is sent with the Holy Ghost from heaven.

What is the church of God redeemed by from the curse of the law? It is by something done within them, or by something done without them.

If you say it is redeemed by something that worketh in them, then why did the man Christ Jesus hang on the cross on Calvary, without the gate of Jerusalem, for the sins of his children? and why do the Scriptures say that "through this man is preached to us the forgiveness of sins?"

The answer thou givest is, "The church of God is redeemed by Christ Jesus who is revealed in all believers, and Christ Jesus wrought in them mightily, and it was he that wrought in them to will and to do. This is plain scripture; and the man Christ Jesus," sayest thou, "hanged on the cross on Calvary because they wickedly judged him to be a blasphemer, and through their envy persecuted him to death because he bore witness against

them, and in their account he died and hanged on the cross an evil-doer."

Ha, friend, I had thought thou hadst not been so much hardened. Art thou not ashamed thus to slight the death of the man Christ Jesus on the cross, and reckon it not effectual for salvation, but sayest, the church is redeemed by Christ Jesus who is revealed within? and to confirm it, thou dost also corruptly bring in this scripture: "Whereunto I labor, according to his working which worketh in me mightily;" by which words Paul signifies, that as God was with him in the ministry of the word, so did he also strive according to his working which wrought in him mightily. What is this to the purpose?

That thy answer is false, I shall clearly prove. First, because thou deniest that redemption was wrought out for sinners by the man Christ Jesus on the cross on Calvary; when the scripture says plainly, that when he did hang on the tree, then did he bear our sins there in his own body. And secondly, in thy saying it is redeemed by Christ within by being within, when the work of the *Spirit* of Christ in believers is to make known to the soul, by dwelling within, which way and how they are redeemed by the man Christ Jesus on the cross. And this I prove further, because when thou art forced to answer to these words, Why did the man Christ Jesus hang on the cross on Calvary for the sins of his children? thou sayest, "Because they wickedly judged him to be a blasphemer." Friend, I did not ask thee why the *Jews* did put him to death; but why was he crucified there for the sins of his children? But thou, willing to cover over thine error, goest on cunningly, saying, that through their envy they persecuted him to death for an evil-doer.

As for thy saying that salvation is Christ within, if thou mean in opposition to Christ without, instead of pleading for Christ thou wilt plead against him; for Christ,

God-man, without on the cross, did bring in salvation for sinners; and the right believing of that justifies the soul. Therefore Christ within, or the Spirit of him who did give himself a ransom, doth not work out justification for the soul in the soul, but doth lead the soul out of itself and out of what can be done within itself, to look for salvation in that Man that is now absent from his saints on earth. 2 Cor. 5 : 6. Why so? For it knows that there is salvation in none other, Acts 4 : 12; and therefore I would wish thee to have a care what thou doest, for I tell thee, that Man who is now jeered by some, because he is preached to be without them, will very suddenly come the second time to the great overthrow of those who have spoken and shall still speak against him.

And indeed they that will follow Christ aright must follow him without, to the cross without, for justification on Calvary without—that is, they must seek for justification by his obedience without—to the grave without, and to his ascension and intercession in heaven without; and this must be done through the operation of his own Holy Spirit that he has promised shall show these things unto them, being given within them for that purpose. Now the Spirit of Christ, that leads also; but whither? It leads to Christ without.

What a poor argument is this to say, that "because the Spirit of Christ doth convince of sin, therefore whatsoever doth convince of sin must needs be the Spirit of Christ:" as much as to say, because the saints are called the light of the world, therefore the saints are the Saviour of the world, seeing Christ also doth call himself the light of the world; or because the moon hath or is light, therefore the moon is the sun.

X. CONVICTION OF SIN.

When man is taken and laid under the day of God's power, when Christ is opening his ear to discipline, and speaking to him that his heart may receive instruction, many times that poor man is as if the devil had found him, and not God. How frenzily he imagines; how crossly he thinks; how ungainly he carries it under convictions, counsels, and his present apprehension of things! I know some are more powerfully dealt withal, and more strongly bound at first by the word; but others more in an ordinary manner, that the flesh and reason may be seen to the glory of Christ. Yea, and where the will is made more quickly to comply with its salvation, it is no thanks to the sinner at all. It is the day of the power of the Lord that has made the work so soon to appear. Therefore count this an act of love, in the height of love; love in a great degree.

"I heard thy voice in the garden." Gen. 3 : 10. It is a word from without that does it. While Adam listened to his own heart, he thought fig-leaves a sufficient remedy; but the voice that walked in the garden shook him out of all such fancies.

A man's own righteousness will not fortify his conscience from fear and terror, when God begins to come near to him to judgment.

Few know the weight of sin. When the guilt thereof takes hold of the conscience, it commands homeward all the faculties of the soul.

It was upon this account that Peter and James and John were called the sons of thunder, because in the word which they were to preach there were to be not only lightnings, but thunders—not only illuminations, but a great

seizing of the heart with the dread and majesty of God, to the effectual turning of the sinner to him.

Lightnings without thunder are in this case dangerous, because they that receive the one without the other are subject to miscarry: they were once enlightened, but you read of no thunder they had, and they were subject to fall into an irrecoverable state. Paul had thunder with his lightning, to the shaking of his soul; so had the three thousand, so had the jailer: they that receive light without thunder, are subject to turn the grace of God into wantonness; but they that know the terror of God will persuade men. So then, when he decrees to give the rain of his grace to a man, he makes a way for the lightning and thunder; not the one without the other, but the one following the other.

We have had great lightnings in this land of late years, but little thunders; and that is one reason why so little grace is found where light is, and why so many professors run on their heads in such a day as this is, notwithstanding all they have seen.

The method of God is to kill and make alive, to smite and then heal.

He that hath not seen his lost condition, hath not seen a safe condition; he that did never see himself in the devil's snare, did never see himself in Christ's bosom.

Grace proceeds from the throne, from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Wherefore, sinner, here is laid a necessity upon thee; one of the two must be thy lot: either thou must accept of God's grace, and be content to be saved freely thereby, notwithstanding all thy undeservings and unworthiness, or else thou must be damned for thy rebellion, and for thy neglecting of this grace. Wherefore consider with thyself and think what is best to be done. Is it bet-

ter that thou submit to the grace and mercy of God, and that thou accept of grace to reign for thee, in thee, and over thee, than that thou shouldst run the hazard of eternal damnation because thou wouldst not be saved by grace? Consider of this, I say, for grace is now in authority: it reigns, and proceeds from the throne. This therefore calls for thy most grave and sedate thoughts. Thou art in a strait; wilt thou fly before Moses, or with David fall into the hands of the Lord? Wilt thou go to hell for sin, or to life by grace? One of the two, as was said before, must be thy lot; for grace is king, is upon the throne, and will admit of no other way to glory. Rom. 5:2. In and by it thou must stand, if thou hast any hope, or canst at all rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

If thou do get off thy convictions, and not the right way—which is by seeing thy sins washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ—it is a question whether God will ever knock at thy heart again or no; but rather say, "Such a one is joined to idols; let him alone. My spirit, my ministers, my word, my mercy, my grace, my love, my pity, my common providences, shall no more strive with him; let him alone." O sad! O miserable! who would slight convictions that are on their souls, which tend so much for their good?

In the creation of man, God began with his outside; but in the work of regeneration, he first begins within, at the heart.

Whoever receive the grace that is tendered in the gospel, they must be quickened by the power of God, their eyes must be opened, their understandings illuminated, their ears unstopped, their hearts circumcised, their wills also rectified, and the Son of God revealed in them.

XI. CONVERSION.

THE DIFFICULTY OF CONVERSION.

Conversion to God is not so easy and so smooth a thing, as some would have men believe it is. Why is man's heart compared to fallow ground, God's word to a plough, and his ministers to ploughmen, if the heart indeed has no need of breaking in order to the receiving of the seed of God unto eternal life? Why is the conversion of the soul compared to the grafting of a tree, if that be done without cutting?

CONVERSION THE POWER OF GOD.

A broken heart is the handy-work of God, a sacrifice of his own preparing, a material fitted for himself. By breaking the heart he opens it, and makes it a receptacle for the graces of his Spirit; that is the cabinet, when unlocked, where God lays up the jewels of the gospel: there he puts his fear: "I will put my fear in their heart;" there he writes his law: "I will write my law in their heart;" there he puts his Spirit: "I will put my Spirit within you."

The heart God chooses for his cabinet: there he hides his treasure; there is the seat of justice, mercy, and of every grace of God.

Here is naught but open war, acts of hostility, and shameful rebellion on the sinner's side; and what delight can God take in that? Wherefore, if God will bend and buckle the spirit of such a one, he must shoot an arrow at him, a bearded arrow, such as may not be plucked out of the wound—an arrow that will stick fast, and cause that the sinner fall down as dead at God's foot. Then will the sinner deliver up his arms, and surrender up himself as one conquered into the hand of God, and beg for the Lord's pardon, and not till then sincerely.

And now God has overcome, and his right hand and his holy arm have gotten him the victory. Now he rides in triumph, with his captive at his chariot-wheel; now he glories, now the bells in heaven do ring, now the angels shout for joy, yea, are bid to do so: "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost."

REGENERATION.

Thou thinkest that thou art a Christian; thou shouldst be sorry else. Well, but when did God show thee that thou wert no Christian? When didst thou see that; and in the light of the Spirit of Christ see that thou wert under the wrath of God because of original sin? Rom. 5:12. Nay, dost thou know what original sin means? Is it not the least in thy thoughts? And dost thou not rejoice in secret that thou art the same that thou ever wert? If so, then know for certain that the wrath of God to this very day abideth on thee, John 3:36; and if so, then thou art one of those that will fall in the judgment, except thou art born again and made a new creature. 2 Cor. 5:17

THE STRAIT GATE.

The porch, at which was an ascent to the temple, had a gate belonging to it. This gate, according to the prophet Ezekiel, was six cubits wide. The leaves of this gate were double, one folding this way, the other folding that. Ezek. 40:48.

Now here some may object, and say, "Since the way to God by these doors was so wide, why doth Christ say the way and gate is narrow?"

Answer. The straitness, the narrowness, must not be understood of the gate simply, but because of that cumber that some men carry with them that pretend to be going to heaven. Six cubits! What is sixteen cubits to him who would enter in here with all the world on his back? The young man in the gospel who made such a noise for

heaven, might have gone in easy enough, for in six cubits' breadth there is room; but, poor man, he was not for going in thither unless he might carry in his houses upon his shoulders too; and so the gate was strait. Mark 10:17–23.

Wherefore, he that will enter in at the gate of heaven, of which this gate into the temple was a type, must go in by himself, and not with his bundles of trash on his back; and if he will go in thus, he need not fear but there is room. "The righteous nation that keepeth the truth, they shall enter in."

They that enter in at the gate of the inner court must be clothed in fine linen; how then shall they go into the temple that carry the clogs of the dirt of this world at their heels? Thus saith the Lord, "No stranger uncircumcised in heart, or uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary."

The wideness, therefore, of this gate, is for this cause here made mention of, namely, to encourage them that would gladly enter thereat according to the mind of God, and not to flatter them that are not for leaving off all for God.

Wherefore let such as would go in remember that here is room, even a gate to enter at, six cubits wide. We have been all this while but on the outside of the temple, even in the courts of the house of the Lord, to see the beauty and glory that is there. The beauty hereof made men cry out and say, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts; my soul longeth, yea, fainteth for the courts of the Lord;" and to say, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand."

COMING TO CHRIST.

Question. How must I be qualified before I shall dare to believe in Christ?

Answer. Come, sensible of thy sins and of the wrath

of God due unto them, for thus thou art bid to come. Matt. 11 : 28.

Question. Did ever any come thus to Christ?

Answer. David came thus, Paul and the jailer came thus; also Christ's murderers came thus. Psa. 51 : 1–3; Acts 9 : 6; 16 : 30, 31; 2 : 37.

Question. But doth it not seem most reasonable that we should first mend and be good?

Answer. The whole have no need of the physician, but those that are sick; Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Question. But is it not the best way, if one can, to mend first?

Answer. This is just as if a sick man should say, "Is it not best for me to be well before I go to the physician?" or as if a wounded man should say, "When I am cured I will lay on the plaster."

Question. But when a poor creature sees its vileness, it is afraid to come to Christ, is it not?

Answer. Yes, but without ground; for he has said, "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not;" and "to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Isa. 35 : 4; 66 : 2.

Question. What encouragement can be given us thus to come?

Answer. The prodigal came thus, and his father received him, and fell upon his neck and kissed him. Thus Christ received the Colossians, and consequently all that are saved. Luke 15; Col. 2 : 13.

Question. Will you give me one more encouragement?

Answer. The promises are so worded, that they that are scarlet sinners, crimson sinners, blasphemous sinners, have encouragement to come to him with hopes of life. Isa. 1 : 18; Mark 3 : 28; John 6 : 36; Luke 24 : 47; Acts 13 : 36

TEMPTATIONS OF THE SOUL COMING TO CHRIST.

No sooner doth Satan perceive what God is doing with the soul in a way of grace and mercy, but he endeavoreth what he may, to make the renewing thereof bitter and wearisome work to the sinner. O what mists, what mountains, what clouds, what darkness, what objections, what false apprehensions of God, of Christ, of grace, of the word, and of the soul's condition, doth he now lay before it, and haunt it with! whereby he dejecteth, casteth down, daunteth, distresseth, and almost driveth it quite into despair. Now, by the reason of these things, faith and all the grace that is in the soul is hard put to it to come at the promise, and by the promise, to Christ; as it is said, when the tempest and great danger of shipwreck lay upon the vessel in which Paul was, "They had much work to come by the boat." Acts 27 : 16. For Satan's design is, if he cannot keep the soul from Christ, to make his coming to him and closing with him as hard, as difficult and troublesome as he by his devices can. But faith, true justifying faith, is a grace that is not weary by all that Satan can do; but meditateth upon the word, and taketh stomach and courage, fighteth and crieth; and by crying and fighting, by help from heaven, its way is made through all the oppositions that appear so mighty, and draweth up at last to Jesus Christ, into whose bosom it putteth the soul; where, for the time, it sweetly resteth, after its marvellous tossings to and fro.

And besides what hath been said, let me yet illustrate this truth unto you by this familiar similitude.

Suppose a man, a traitor, that by the law should die for his sin, is yet such a one that the king hath exceeding kindness for; may not the king of his clemency pardon this man, yea, order that his pardon should be drawn up and sealed, and so in every sense be made sure, and yet for the present keep all this close enough from the ears or the knowledge of the person therein concerned? Yea, may not the king after all leave this person, with others under

the same transgression, to sue for and obtain this pardon with great expense and difficulty, with many tears and heartachings, with many fears and dubious cogitations?

Why, this is the case between God and the soul that he saveth: he saveth him, pardoneth him, and secureth him from the curse and death that are due unto sin, but yet doth not tell him so; but he ascends in his great suit unto God for it. Only this difference we must make between God and the potentates of this world: God cannot pardon before the sinner stands before him righteous by the righteousness of Christ; because he has, in judgment, and justice, and righteousness, threatened and concluded that he that lacks righteousness shall die.

TRIALS AND ENCOURAGEMENTS OF THE AWAKENED.

There are two things in special, when men begin to be awakened, that kill their thoughts of being saved.

1. A sense of sin. 2. The wages due thereto. These kill the heart; for who can bear up under the guilt of sin? "If our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how can we then live?" How, indeed! it is impossible. So neither can man grapple with the justice of God. Can thy heart endure, or thy hands be strong? they cannot. A wounded spirit, who can bear? Men cannot, angels cannot; wherefore, if now Christ be hid, and the blessing of faith in his blood denied, woe be to them: such go after Saul and Judas, one to the sword and the other to the halter, and so miserably end their days. For come to God they dare not; the thoughts of that eternal Majesty strike them through.

But now present such poor dejected sinners with a crucified Christ, and persuade them that the sins under which they shake and tremble were long ago laid upon the back of Christ, and the noise and sense and fear of damning begins to cease, depart, and fly away: dolors and terrors

fade and vanish, and that soul conceiveth hopes of life; for thus the soul argueth: "Is this indeed the truth of God, that Christ was made to be sin to me—was made the curse of God for me? Hath he indeed borne all my sins, and spilt his blood for my redemption? O blessed tidings, O welcome grace! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Now is peace come, now the face of heaven is altered. Behold, all things are become new." Now the sinner can abide God's presence, yea, sees unutterable glory and beauty in him; for here he sees justice smile. While Jacob was afraid of Esau, how heavily did he drive, even towards the promised land; but when killing thoughts were turned into kissing, and the fears of the sword's point turned into brotherly embraces, what says he? "I have seen thy face as though it had been the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me."

So and far better is it with a poor distressed sinner, at the revelation of the grace of God through Jesus Christ. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." O, what work will such a word make upon a wounded conscience, especially when the next words follow: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Now the soul sees qualifications able to set him quiet in the sight of God—qualifications prepared already. Prepared, I say, already, and that by God through Christ; even such as can perfectly answer the law. What doth the law require? If obedience, here it is; if bloody sacrifice, here it is; if infinite righteousness, here it is. Now then the law condemns no more him that believes before God; for all its demands are answered, all its curses are swallowed up in the death and curse Christ underwent.

Objection. But reason saith, "Since personal sin brought the death, surely personal obedience must bring us life and glory."

Answer. True, reason saith so, and so doth the law itself, Rom. 10 : 5 ; but God we know is above them both, and he in the covenant of grace saith otherwise, to wit, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Let reason then hold its tongue ; yea, let the law with all its wisdom subject itself to him that made it ; let it look for sin where God hath laid it ; let it approve the righteousness which God approveth : yea, though it be not that of the law, but that by faith of Jesus Christ.

God hath made him our righteousness ; God hath made him our sin ; God hath made him our curse ; God hath made him our blessing : methinks this word, God hath made it so, should silence all the world.

I shall leave the obstinate where I found him, and shall say to him that is willing to be saved, "Sinner, thou hast the advantage of thy neighbor, not only because thou art willing to live, but because there are those that are willing thou shouldst, to wit, those unto whom the issues of death belong ; and they are the Father and the Son, to whom be glory with the blessed Spirit of grace."

I have seen some, that have promised nothing at first setting out to be pilgrims, and that one would have thought could not have lived another day, that have yet proved very good pilgrims.

Objection. I am afraid the day of grace is past, and if it should be, what shall I do then ?

Answer. With some men indeed, the day of grace is past before their lives are at an end : or thus, the day of grace is past before the day of death is come ; as Christ saith, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace," the word of

grace or reconciliation; "but now they are hid from thine eyes." Luke 19:42. But for thy better satisfaction, let me ask, Doth the Lord knock still at the door of thy heart, by his word and Spirit? If so, then the day of grace is not passed with thy soul; for where he doth so knock, there he doth also proffer and promise to come in and sup, that is, to communicate of his love unto them; which he would not do were the day of grace passed with the soul. Rev. 3:20.

Objection. But how shall I know whether Christ doth so knock at my heart as to be desirous to come in, that I may know also whether the day of grace be passed with me or not?

Answer. Doth the Lord make thee sensible of thy miserable state without an interest in Jesus Christ; and that naturally thou hast no share in him, no faith in him, no communion with him, no delight in him, or the least love to him? If he hath, and is doing this, he is knocking at thy heart. Doth he, together with this, put into thy heart an earnest desire after communion with him, with holy resolutions not to be satisfied without it? Doth he sometimes give thee some secret persuasions, though scarcely discernible, that thou mayest attain an interest in him? Doth he now and then glance in some of the promises into thy heart, causing them to leave some heavenly savor, though but for a short time, on thy spirit? Dost thou at times see some little excellency in Christ, and doth it stir up in thy soul some breathings after him? If so, then fear not. The day of grace is not passed with thy poor soul; for if the day of grace should be passed with such a soul as this, then that scripture must be broken, where Christ saith, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise," upon no terms whatsoever, "cast out." John 6:37.

Get thy heart warmed with the sweet promise of Christ's acceptance of the coming sinner, and that will

make thee make more haste unto him. Discouraging thoughts are like unto cold weather; they benumb the senses and make us go ungainly about our business; but the sweet and warm gleeds* of promise are like the comfortable beams of the sun, which enliveneth and refresheth. You see how little the bee and the fly do play in the air in winter—why, the cold hinders them from doing it: but when the wind and sun are warm, who so busy as they?

Objection. But saith another, "I am so heartless, so slow, and, as I think, so indifferent in my coming, that to speak truth, I know not whether my kind of coming ought to be called a coming to Christ."

Answer. I read of some that are to follow Christ in chains—I say, to come after him in chains. Isa. 45 : 14. Surely they that come after Christ in chains, come to him in great difficulty.

And what chain so heavy as those that discourage thee? Thy chain, which is made up of guilt and filth, is heavy; it is a wretched band about thy neck, by which thy strength doth fail. But come, though thou comest in chains; it is glory to Christ, that a sinner comes after him in chains. The chinking of thy chains, though troublesome to thee, is not, nor can be, destruction to thy salvation. It is Christ's work and glory to save thee from thy chains, to enlarge thy steps, and set thee at liberty. The blind man, though called, surely could not come apace to Jesus Christ; but Jesus Christ could stand still and stay for him.

To slight grace, to despise mercy, and to stop the ear when God speaks, when he speaks such great things so much to our profit, is a great provocation.

He offers, he calls, he woos, he invites, he prays, he beseeches us, in this day of his grace, to be reconciled to

* Glowing coals.

him; yea, and has provided for us the means of reconciliation himself. Now, to despise these must needs be a provoking; and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Objection. But some man may say unto me, "Fain I would be saved, fain I would be saved by Christ; but I fear this day of grace is past, and that I shall perish, notwithstanding the exceeding riches of the grace of God."

Answer. To this doubt I would answer several things.

First, with respect to the day: 1. Art thou jogged and shaken and molested at the hearing of the word? Is thy conscience awakened and convinced, then, that thou art at present in a perishing state, and that thou hast need to cry to God for mercy? This is a hopeful sign that the day of grace is not past with thee.

2. Are there in thy more retired condition, arguings, strugglings, and strivings with thy spirit to persuade thee of the vanity of what vain things thou lovest, and to win thee in thy soul to a choice of Christ Jesus and his heavenly things? Take heed and rebel not, for the day of God's grace and patience will not be past with thee till he saith his Spirit shall strive no more with thee; for then the woe comes, when he shall depart from them, and when he says to the means of grace, "Let them alone."

3. Art thou visited in the night seasons with dreams about thy state, and that thou art in danger of being lost? Hast thou heart-shaking apprehensions, when deep sleep is upon thee, of hell, death, and judgment to come? These are signs that God has not wholly left thee, or cast thee behind his back for ever.

All this while God has not left the sinner, nor is come to the end of his patience towards him, but stands at least with the door of grace ajar in his hand, as being loath as yet to bolt it against him.

4. Art thou followed with affliction, and dost thou hear God's angry voice in thy affliction? Doth he send with

thy affliction an interpreter to show thee thy vileness, and why or wherefore the hand of God is upon thee and upon what thou hast, to wit, that it is for thy sinning against him, and that thou mightst be turned to him? If so, thy summer is not quite ended, thy harvest is not quite over and gone. Take heed; stand out no longer, lest he cause darkness, and lest thy feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and lest while you look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.

5. Hast thou any enticing touches of the word of God upon thy mind? Doth as it were some holy word of God give a glance upon thee, cast a smile upon thee, let fall though it be but one drop of its savor upon thy spirit; yea, though it stays but one moment with thee? Oh, then, the day of grace is not past, the gate of heaven is not shut, nor God's heart withdrawn from thee as yet. Take heed therefore, and beware that thou make much of the heavenly gift and of that good word of God of which he has made thee taste.

Secondly, with respect to thy desires, what are they? Wouldst thou be saved? Wouldst thou be saved with a thorough salvation? Wouldst thou be saved from guilt and filth too? Wouldst thou be the servant of thy Saviour? Art thou indeed weary of the service of thy old masters, the devil, sin, and the world? And have these desires put thy soul to the flight? Hast thou through desires betaken thyself to thy heels? Dost thou fly to him that is a Saviour from the wrath to come, for life?

If these be thy desires, and if they be unfeigned, fear not. Thou art one of those runaways which God has commanded our Lord to receive, and not to send thee back to the devil thy master again, but to give thee a place in his house, even the place which thou likest best.

"But," you say, "I am afraid I am not elect or chosen to salvation."

At present, lay the thoughts of thy election by, and ask

thyself these questions: Do I see my lost condition? Do I see salvation is nowhere but in Christ? Would I share in this salvation by faith in him? And would I be thoroughly saved from the filth as well as from the guilt? Do I love Christ, his Father, his saints, his words and ways? This is the way to prove we are elect.

Wherefore, sinner, when Satan or thine own heart seeks to puzzle thee with election, say thou, "I cannot attend to talk of this point now; but stay till I know that I am called of God to the fellowship of his Son, and then I will show you that I am elect, and that my name is written in the book of life."

If poor distressed souls would observe this order, they might save themselves the trouble of an unprofitable labor under these unreasonable and soul-sinking doubts.

Let us therefore, upon the sight of our wretchedness, fly and venturously leap into the arms of Christ, which are now as open to receive us into his bosom as they were when nailed to the cross.

Let me tell thee, soul, for thy comfort, who art coming in to Christ panting and sighing as if thy heart would break, let me tell thee, soul, thou wouldst never have come to Christ if he had not first, by the virtue of his blood and intercession, sent into thy heart an earnest desire after Christ; let me tell thee also, that it is his business to make intercession for thee, not only that thou mayest come in, but that thou mayest be preserved when thou art come in.

They that are coming to Jesus Christ are ofttimes heartily afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive them.

This word, "in nowise," cutteth the throat of all objections; and it was dropped by the Lord Jesus for that very end, and to help the faith that is mixed with unbelief.

But I am a great sinner, sayest thou. I will in nowise cast out, says Christ. But I am an old sinner, sayest thou. I will in nowise cast out, says Christ. But I am a hard-hearted sinner, sayest thou. I will in nowise cast out, says Christ. But I have served Satan all my days, sayest thou. I will in nowise cast out, says Christ. But I have sinned against light, sayest thou. I will in nowise cast out, says Christ. But I have sinned against mercy, sayest thou. I will in nowise cast out, says Christ. But I have no good thing to bring with me, sayest thou. I WILL IN NOWISE CAST OUT, says Christ.

FEARS IN COMING TO CHRIST.

1. This fear that Christ will not receive thee is *for want of the knowledge of Christ.* Thou knowest but little of the grace and kindness that is in the heart of Christ; thou knowest but little of the virtue and merit of his blood; thou knowest but little of the willingness that is in his heart to save thee. Slowness of heart to believe flows from thy foolishness in the things of Christ; this is evident to all that are acquainted with themselves, and are seeking after Jesus Christ. The more ignorance, the more unbelief; the more knowledge of Christ, the more faith. "They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee."

2. Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee may be also *a consequence of thy earnest and strong desires after thy salvation by him.* For this I observe, that strong desires to have are attended with strong fears of missing. What man most sets his heart upon, and what his desires are most after, he ofttimes most fears he shall not obtain. So, the ruler of the synagogue had a great desire that his daughter should live, and that desire was attended with fear that she would not. Therefore Christ saith unto him, "Be not afraid."

Now thou fearest the sins of thy youth, the sins of thine old age, the sins of thy calling, the sins of thy Christian

duties, the sins of thine heart, or something; thou thinkest something or other will alienate the heart and affections of Jesus Christ from thee.

But be content. A little more knowledge of him will make thee take better heart; thy earnest desires shall not be attended with such burning fears; thou shalt hereafter say, "This is my infirmity."

3. Thy fear that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from a sense of *thy own unworthiness*. Thou seest what a poor, sorry, wretched, worthless creature thou art; and seeing this, thou fearest Christ will not receive thee. "Alas," sayst thou, "I am the vilest of all men, a town-sinner, a ringleading sinner. I am not only a sinner myself, but I have made others twofold worse the children of hell also. Besides, now I am under some awakenings and stirrings of mind after salvation, even now I find my heart rebellious, carnal, hard, treacherous, desperate, prone to unbelief, to despair; it forgetteth the word, it wandereth, it runneth to the ends of the earth. There is not, I am persuaded, one in all the world that hath such a desperate wicked heart as mine is. My soul is careless to do good; but none more earnest to do that which is evil. . . . . .

"Can such a one as I am live in glory? Can a holy, a just, and a righteous God think, with honor to his name, of saving such a vile creature as I am? Saved I would be; and who is there that would not, were he in my condition? Indeed I wonder at the madness and folly of others, when I see them leap and skip so carelessly about the mouth of hell. Bold sinner, how darest thou tempt God by laughing at the breach of his holy law? But, alas, they are not so bad one way, but I am worse another; I wish myself were any body but myself. And yet, here again I know not what to wish. When I see such as I believe are coming to Jesus Christ, Oh I bless them. But I am confounded in myself, to see how unlike I am to a very good

many in the world. They can hear, read, pray, remember, repent, be humble, and do every thing better than so vile a wretch as I."

Thus the sense of unworthiness creates and heightens fears in the hearts of them that are coming to Jesus Christ. But indeed it should not, for who needs the physician but the sick? Or whom did Christ come into the world to save, but the chief of sinners? Wherefore, the more thou seest thy sins, the faster fly thou to Jesus Christ. As it is with the man that carrieth his broken arm in a sling to the bonesetter, still, as he thinks of his broken arm, and as he feels the pain and anguish, he hastens his pace to the man. And if Satan meets thee, and asketh, "Whither goest thou?" tell him thou art maimed, and art going to the Lord Jesus. If he objects thine own unworthiness, tell him, that even as the sick seeketh the physician; as he that hath broken bones seeks him that can set them; so thou art going to Jesus Christ for healing for thy sin-sick soul.

But it ofttimes happeneth to him that flies for his life, he despairs of escaping, and therefore delivers himself up into the hand of the pursuer. But up, up, sinner; be of good cheer; Christ came to save the unworthy one. Be not faithless, but believing. Come away, man. The Lord Jesus calls thee, saying, "And him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out."

4. Thy fear that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from a sense of *the exceeding mercy of being saved*. Besides, the Holy Ghost hath a way to greaten heavenly things to the understanding of the coming sinner; yea, and at the same time to greaten, too, the sin and unworthiness of that sinner. Now, the soul staggering by wonders, saying, "What! to be made like angels, like Christ; to live in eternal bliss, joy, and felicity! This is for angels, and for them that can walk like angels."

Thus doth the greatness of the things desired quite

dash and overthrow the mind of the desire. "O, it is too big, it is too big, it is too great a mercy."

But, coming sinner, let me reason with thee. Thou sayest it is too big, too great. Well, will things that are less satisfy thy soul? Will a less thing than heaven, than glory and eternal life, answer thy desires? "No, nothing less. Yet I fear they are too big, and too good for me even to obtain." Well, as big and as good as they are, God giveth them to such as thou. They are not too big for God to give; no, not too big to give freely. Be content; let God give like himself; he is that eternal God, and giveth like himself. When kings give, they do not use to give as poor men do. Now, God is a great King; let him give like a king; nay, let him give like himself, and do thou receive like thyself. He has all, and thou hast nothing.

5. Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from *thine own folly in inventing*, yea, in thy chalking out to God a way to bring thee home to Jesus Christ. Some souls that are coming to Jesus Christ are great tormentors of themselves upon this account. They conclude that if their coming to Jesus Christ is right, they must needs be brought home thus and thus.

Now, I say, if God brings thee to Christ, and not by the way that thou hast appointed, then thou art at a loss; and for thy being at a loss, thou mayest thank thyself. God hath more ways than thou knowest of to bring a sinner to Jesus Christ; but he will not give thee beforehand an account by which of them he will bring thee to Christ.

Sometimes he hath his ways in the whirlwind, but sometimes the Lord is not there.

If God will deal more gently with thee than with others of his children, grudge not at it; refuse not the waters that go softly, lest he bring up to thee the waters of the rivers strong and many, even these two smoking firebrands, the devil and guilt of sin. He saith to Peter,

"Follow me;" and what thunder did Zaccheus hear or see? "Zaccheus, come down," said Christ; and he came down, says Luke, and received him joyfully.

But had Peter or Zaccheus made the objection that thou hast made—looking for a heavy load of guilt, or fearful temptations of Satan—and directed the Spirit of the Lord as thou hast done, they might have looked long enough before they had found themselves coming to Jesus Christ.

Poor creature! Thou criest, "If I were tempted, I could come faster and with more confidence to Jesus Christ." Thou sayest thou knowest not what. What says Job? "Withdraw thy hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid: then call thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer thou me." Job 13: 21, 22. It is not the over-heavy load of sin, but the discovery of mercy—not the roaring of the devil, but the drawing of the Father, that makes a man come to Jesus Christ. I myself know all these things.

True, sometimes they that come to Jesus Christ, come the way that thou desirest—the loading, tempted way; but the Lord also leads some by the waters of comfort. If I was to choose when to go a long journey, to wit, whether I would go it in the dead of winter or in the pleasant spring—though if it was a very profitable journey, as that of coming to Christ is, I would choose to go it through fire and water before I would lose the benefit—but I say, if I might choose the time, I would choose to go in the pleasant spring, because the way would be more delightsome, the days longer and warmer, the nights shorter, and not so cold.

Trouble not thyself, coming sinner: if thou seest thy lost condition by original and actual sin; if thou seest thy need of the spotless righteousness of Jesus Christ; if thou art willing to be found in him, and to take up thy cross and follow him, then pray for a fair wind and good weather,

and come away. Stick no longer in a muse and doubt about things, but come away to Jesus Christ.

6. Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee may arise from *those decays that thou findest in thy soul*, even while thou art coming to him. Some, even as they are coming to Jesus Christ, do find themselves grow worse and worse. To explain myself: there is such a one coming to Jesus Christ, who, when he first began to look out after him, was sensible, affectionate, and broken in spirit, but now is grown dark, senseless, hard-hearted, and inclining to neglect spiritual duties. Besides, he now finds in himself inclinations to unbelief, atheism, blasphemy, and the like; now, he finds he cannot tremble at God's word, his judgments, nor the apprehension of hell-fire; neither can he, as he thinketh, be sorry for these things.

This man is in the wilderness among wild beasts. Here he sees a bear, there a lion, yonder a leopard, a wolf, a dragon. Devils of all sorts, doubts of all sorts, fears of all sorts haunt and molest his soul. This man feeleth the infirmity of his flesh; he findeth a proneness in himself to be desperate. Now he chides with God, flings and tumbles like a wild bull in a net, and still the guilt of all returns upon himself to the crushing of him to pieces. Yet he feeleth his heart so hard that he can find, as he thinks, no kindness under any of his miscarriages. Now, he is a lump of confusion in his own eyes, whose spirit and actions are without order. "Now, I see I am lost," says the sinner; "this is not coming to Jesus Christ; such a desperately hard and wretched heart as mine is, cannot be a gracious one," saith the sinner. And bid such a one be better, he says, "I cannot; no, I cannot."

Question. But what will you say to a soul in this condition?

Answer. I will say, that temptations have attended the best of God's people; I will say that temptations come to do us good; and I will say also, that there is a differ-

ence betwixt growing worse and worse, and thy seeing more clearly how bad thou art.

There is a man of an ill-favored countenance who hath too high a conceit of his beauty, and wanting the benefit of a glass, he still stands in his own conceit. At last a limner is sent unto him, who draweth his ill-favored face to the life. Now, looking thereon, he begins to be convinced that he is not half so handsome as he thought he was. Coming sinner, thy temptations are these painters; they have drawn out thy ill-favored heart to the life, and have set it before thine eyes, and now thou seest how ill-favored thou art.

Some that are coming to Christ cannot be persuaded, until the temptation comes, that they are so vile as the scripture saith they are. True, they see so much of their wretchedness as to drive them to Christ. But there is an over and above of wickedness which they see not. Peter little thought that he had had in his heart cursing and swearing and lying, and an inclination to deny his Master, before the temptation came; but when that indeed came upon him, then he found it there to his sorrow.

It may be that thy graces must be tried in the fire, that that rust which cleaveth to them may be taken away, and themselves proved, both before angels and devils, to be far better than gold that perisheth. It may be also, that thy graces are to receive special praises and honor and glory, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to judgment, for all the exploits that thou hast acted by them against hell and its infernal crew, in the day of thy temptation.

But to conclude this, put the worst to the worst, and then things will be bad enough: suppose that thou art to this day without the grace of God; yet thou art but a miserable creature, a sinner that has need of a blessed Saviour; and the text presents thee with one as good and kind as heart can wish, who also for thy encouragement saith, "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

MERCY'S EXPERIENCE.

So the Interpreter addressed him to Mercy, and said unto her, "And what moved thee to come hither, sweetheart?"

Then Mercy blushed and trembled, and for a while continued silent.

Then said he, "Be not afraid; only believe, and speak thy mind."

Then she began, and said, "Truly, sir, my want of experience is that which makes me covet to be in silence, and that also that filleth me with fears of coming short at last. I cannot tell of visions and dreams as my friend Christiana can, nor know I what it is to mourn for my refusing of the counsel of those that were good relations."

INTERPRETER. "What was it then, dear heart, that hath prevailed with thee to do as thou hast done?"

MERCY. "Why, when our friend here was packing up to be gone from our town, [the city of Destruction,] I and another went accidentally to see her. So we knocked at the door and went in. When we were within, and seeing what she was doing, we asked her what she meant. She said she was sent for to go to her husband; and then she up and told us how she had seen him in a dream, dwelling in a curious place, among immortals, wearing a crown, playing upon a harp, eating and drinking at his Prince's table, and singing praises to him for the bringing him thither. Now methought, while she was telling these things unto us, my heart burned within me. And I said in my heart, 'If this be true, I will leave my father and my mother, and the land of my nativity, and will, if I may, go along with Christiana.'

"So I asked her further of the truth of these things, and if she would let me go with her; for I saw now that there was no dwelling, but with the danger of ruin, any longer in our town. But yet I came away with a heavy

heart; not for that I was unwilling to come away, but for that so many of my relations were left behind. And I am come with all my heart, and will, if I may, go with Christiana to her husband and his King."

INTERPRETER. "Thy setting out is good, for thou hast given credit to the truth; thou art a Ruth, who did, for the love she bare to Naomi and to the Lord her God, leave father and mother, and the land of her nativity, to come out and go with a people that she knew not before. 'The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.'"

FEARS AND ENCOURAGEMENTS OF THE AWAKENED.

Some men are blood-red sinners, crimson sinners, sinners of a double dye; dipped and dipped again before they come to Jesus Christ. Art thou that readest these lines such a one? Speak out, man. Art thou such a one? and art thou now coming to Jesus Christ for the mercy of justification, that thou mightest be made white in his blood and be covered with his righteousness? Fear not; forasmuch as this thy coming betokeneth that thou art of the number of them that the Father hath given to Christ; for he will in no wise cast thee out. "Come now," saith Christ, "and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

I might tell you of the contests and battles that great sinners at their conversion are engaged in, wherein they find the besettings of Satan above any other of the saints. At which time Satan assaults the soul with darkness, fears, frightful thoughts of apparitions; now they sweat, pant, cry out, and struggle for life.

The angels now come down to behold the sight, and

rejoice to see a bit of dust and ashes overcome principalities, and powers, and mights, and dominions.

But when these come to be a little settled, they are prepared for helping others, and are great comforts unto them. Their great sins give great encouragement to the devil to assault them; and by these temptations Christ takes advantage to make them the more helpful to the churches.

The biggest sinner, when he is converted and comes into the church, says to them all by his very coming in, "Behold me, all you that are men and women of a low and timorous spirit, you whose hearts are narrow—for that you have never had the advantage to know, because your sins are few, the largeness of the grace of God—behold, I say, in me the exceeding riches of his grace. I am a pattern set forth before your faces, on whom you may look and take heart." Christ Jesus makes of the biggest sinners bearers and supporters to the rest.

Christ saved the thief, to encourage thieves to come to him for mercy; he saved Magdalen, to encourage other Magdalens to come to him for mercy; he saved Saul, to encourage Sauls to come to him for mercy; and this Paul himself doth say: "For this cause," saith he, "I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

When Christ was crucified and hanged up between the earth and heavens, there were two thieves crucified with him; and behold, he lays hold of one of them and will have him away with him to glory. Was not this a strange act and a display of unthought of grace? Were there none but thieves there, or were the rest of that company out of his reach? Could he not, think you, have stooped from the cross to the ground, and have laid hold of some honester

man, if he would? Yes, doubtless. O, but then he would not have displayed his grace, nor have so pursued his own designs, namely, to get himself a praise and a name; but now he has done it to purpose. For who that shall read this story but must confess that the Son of God is full of grace? for a proof of the riches thereof he left behind him, when upon the cross he took the thief away with him to glory.

I have one thing more to offer for thy encouragement, who deemest thyself one of the biggest sinners; and that is, thou art as it were called by thy name, in the first place to come in for mercy. Thou man of Jerusalem, Luke 24:47, hearken to thy call: men do so in courts of judicature, and presently cry out, "Here, sir;" and then shoulder and crowd, and say, "Pray give way, I am called into the court." Why, this is thy case, thou great, thou Jerusalem sinner; be of good cheer, he calleth thee. Why sittest thou still? Arise. Why standest thou still? Come, man, thy call should give thee authority to come. "Begin at Jerusalem," is thy call and authority to come; wherefore up and shoulder it, man; say, "Stand away, devil, Christ calls me; stand away, unbelief, Christ calls me; stand away, all ye discouraging apprehensions, for my Saviour calls me to him to receive of his mercy." Men will do thus, as I said, in courts below; and why shouldst not thou approach thus to the courts above? The Jerusalem sinner is first in thought, first in commission, first in the record of names; and therefore should give attendance with expectation that he is first to receive mercy of God.

Is not this an encouragement to the biggest sinners to make their application to Christ for mercy? "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden," doth also confirm this thing; that is, that the biggest sinner and he that hath the biggest burden, is he who is first invited. Christ

pointeth over the heads of thousands as he sits on the throne of grace, directly to such a man, and says, "Bring in hither the maimed, the halt, and the blind; let the Jerusalem sinner that stands there behind, come to me." Wherefore, since Christ says to thee, Come, let the angels make a lane and let all men give place, that the Jerusalem sinner may come to Christ for mercy.

DESPAIR OF MERCY UNREASONABLE.

Would Jesus Christ have mercy offered, in the first place, to the biggest sinners? Then this shows how unreasonable a thing it is for men to despair of mercy.

I am concerned only with the despair of those that would be saved, but are too strongly borne down with the burden of their sins. I say, therefore, to thee that art thus, And why despair? Thy despair, if it was reasonable, should flow from thee because found in the land that is beyond the grave, or because thou certainly knowest that Christ will not or cannot save thee.

But for the first, thou art yet in the land of the living; and for the second, thou hast ground to believe quite the contrary. Christ is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him; and if he were not willing, he would not have commanded that mercy, in the first place, should be offered to the biggest sinners. Besides, he hath said, "And let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely"—that is, with all my heart. What ground, now, is here for despair? If thou sayest, "The number and burden of my sins;" I answer, Nay; that is rather a ground for faith; because such a one, above all others, is invited by Christ to come unto him, yea, promised rest and forgiveness, if he come. Matt. 11:28. What ground, then, to despair? Verily, none at all Thy despair, then, is a thing unreasonable, and without footing in the word.

"But I have no experience of God's love; God has

given me no comfort or ground of hope, though I have waited upon him for it many a day."

Thou hast experience of God's love, in that he has opened thine eyes to see thy sins, and in that he has given thee desires to be saved by Jesus Christ. For by thy sense of sin, thou art made to see thy poverty of spirit, and that has laid thee under a sure ground to hope that heaven shall be thine hereafter.

Also, thy desires to be saved by Christ have put thee under another promise, Matt. 5 : 3, 6; so there are two to hold thee up in them, though thy present burden be never so heavy. As for what thou sayest as to God's silence to thee, perhaps he has spoken to thee once or twice already, but thou hast not perceived it. Job 33 : 14, 15.

Besides, God says, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles;" but perhaps it may be long first. "I waited patiently," says David, "I sought the Lord;" and at length his cry was heard: wherefore, he bids his soul wait on God, and says, "For it is good" so to do "before thy saints." Psalm 40 : 1; 52 : 9; 62 : 5.

And what if thou waitest upon God all thy days? Is it below thee? And what if God will cross his book and blot out the handwriting that is against thee, and not let thee know it as yet? Is it fit to say unto God, Thou art hard-hearted? Despair not; thou hast no ground to despair, so long as thou livest in this world. It is a sin to begin to despair before one sets his foot over the threshold of hell-gates. For them that are there, let them despair, and spare not; but as for thee, thou hast no ground to do it. What, despair of bread in a land that is full of corn; despair of mercy, when our God is full of mercy; despair of mercy, when God goes about by his ministers, beseeching sinners to be reconciled to him?

Thou scrupulous fool, where canst thou find that God was ever false to his promise, or that he ever deceived the

soul that ventured itself upon him? He often calls upon sinners to trust him, though they walk in darkness, and have no light. Isa. 50 : 10. They have his promise and oath for their salvation, that flee for refuge to the hope set before them.

Despair, when we have a God of mercy and a redeeming Christ alive! For shame, forbear; let them despair that dwell where there is no God, and that are confined to those chambers of death which can be reached by no redemption.

A living man despair, when he is chid for murmuring and complaining! Lam. 3 : 39. Oh, so long as we are where promises swarm, where mercy is proclaimed, where grace reigns, and where Jerusalem sinners are privileged with the first offer of mercy, it is a base thing to despair.

Despair undervalues the promise, undervalues the invitation, undervalues the proffer of grace. Despair undervalues the ability of God the Father, and the redeeming blood of Christ his Son. Oh, unreasonable despair!

Despair makes man God's judge; it is a controller of the promise, a contradicter of Christ in his large offers of mercy; and one that undertakes to make unbelief the great manager of our reason and judgment, in determining about what God can and will do for sinners.

Despair! it is the devil's fellow, the devil's master; yea, the chains with which he is captivated, and held under darkness for ever: and to give way thereto, in a land, in a state and time that flows with milk and honey, is an uncomely thing.

I would say to my soul, O my soul, this is not the place of despair; this is not the time to despair in. As long as mine eyes can find a promise in the Bible, as long as there is a moment left me of breath or life in this world, so long will I wait or look for mercy, so long will I fight against unbelief and despair.

This is the way to honor God and Christ; this is the

way to set the crown on the promise; this is the way to welcome the invitation and the inviter; and this is the way to thrust thyself under the shelter and protection of the word of grace. Never despair, so long as our text is alive; for that doth sound it out, that mercy by Christ is offered in the first place to the biggest sinner.

Let none despair, let none presume: let none despair, that are sorry for their sins and would be saved by Jesus Christ; let none presume that abide in the liking of their sins, though they seem to know the exceeding grace of Christ; for though the doors stand wide open for the reception of the penitent, yet they are fast enough barred and bolted against the presumptuous sinner. Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. It cannot be that God should be wheedled out of his mercy, or prevailed upon by lips of dissimulation; he knows them that trust in him, and that sincerely come to him by Christ for mercy.

It is, then, not the abundance of sins committed, but the not coming heartily to God by Christ for mercy, that shuts men out of doors.

Is it so, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are ofttimes heartily afraid that he will not receive them? Then this should teach old Christians to pity and pray for young comers. You know the heart of a stranger, for you yourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt. You know the fears and doubts and terrors that take hold of them, for they sometimes took hold of you. Wherefore, pity them, pray for them, encourage them; they need all this.

THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL.

That Jesus Christ, by what he has done, has paid full price to God for sinners and obtained eternal redemption

for them, is evident, if you consider how the preaching thereof has been from that time to this a mighty conqueror over all kinds of sinners. What nation, what people, what kind of sinners have not been subdued by the preaching of a crucified Christ? He upon the white horse with his bow and his crown has conquered, doth conquer, and goeth forth yet conquering and to conquer.

The doctrine of forgiveness of sin conquered his very murderers. They could not withstand the grace; those bloody ones that would kill him whatever it cost them, could stand no longer, but received his doctrine, fell into his bosom, and obtained the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and they shall be in bitterness for him as one is in bitterness for his first-born." Now was the scripture eminently fulfilled, when the kindness of a crucified Christ broke to pieces the hearts of them that had before been his betrayers and murderers. Now was there a great mourning in Jerusalem; now was there wailing and lamentation, mixed with joy and rejoicing.

Though Paul was mad, exceeding mad against Jesus Christ of Nazareth, seeking to put out his name from under heaven; yet the voice from heaven, "I am Jesus, I am the Saviour," how did it conquer him, make him throw down his arms, fall down at Christ's feet, and accept of the forgiveness of sins freely by grace, through redemption by faith in his blood.

How was the sturdy jailer overcome by a promise of forgiveness of sins by faith in Jesus Christ. It stopped his hand of self-murder, it eased him of the gnawings of a guilty conscience and fears of hell-fire, and filled his soul with rejoicing in God.

What shall I say? no man could as yet stand before, and not fall under, the revelation of the forgiveness of sins through a crucified Christ: as hanged, as dying, as accursed

for sinners, he draws all men unto him, men of all sorts, of all degrees.

Shall I add, how have men broken through all difficulties to Jesus, when he hath been discovered to them! Neither lions, nor fires, nor sword, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril; "neither death nor life; nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers; nor things present, nor things to come; nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

BUNYAN'S CONVERSION.

I speak by experience: I was one of these verminous ones, one of these great sin-breeders; I infected all the youth of the town where I was born with all manner of youthful vanities. The neighbors counted me so; my practice proved me so: wherefore Christ Jesus took me first, and taking me first, the contagion was much allayed all the town over. When God made me sigh, they would hearken, and inquiringly say, "What is the matter with John?" They also gave their various opinions of me; but, as I said, sin cooled, and failed as to his full career. When I went out to seek the bread of life, some of them would follow, and the rest be put *into a muse* at home.

When it pleased the Lord to begin to instruct my soul, he found me one of the black sinners of the world; he found me making a sport of oaths, and also of lies; and many a soul-poisoning meal did I make out of divers lusts, as drinking, dancing, etc., with the wicked ones of the world. The Lord finding me in this condition, opened the glass of his law unto me, showing me so clearly my sins—both the greatness of them, and also how abominable they were in his sight—that I thought the very clouds were charged with the wrath of God, and ready to let fall the fire of his jealousy upon me; yet for all this I was so wed-

ded to my sins, that I thought with myself, "I will have them, though I lose my soul," wretch that I was. But God, the great, the rich, the infinitely merciful God, did not take this advantage of my soul to cast me away; but followed me still, and won my heart by giving me some understanding, not only of my miserable state which I was very sensible of, but also that there might be hopes of mercy; taking away my love to lust, and placing in the room thereof a holy love to religion. Thus the Lord won my heart to some desire to hear the word, to grow a stranger to my old companions, and to accompany the people of God, giving me many sweet encouragements from several promises in the scriptures. But after this, the Lord wonderfully set my sins upon my conscience; those sins especially that I had committed since the first convictions: temptations also followed me very hard; especially such as tended to make me question the way of salvation—whether Jesus Christ was the Saviour or not, and whether I had best to venture my soul upon him for salvation, or take some other course—and I continued a year and upwards without any sound evidence as from God to my soul, touching salvation as it comes by Jesus Christ. But at the last, as I may say, when the set time was come, the Lord did set me down blessedly in the truth of the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

About this time the state and happiness of these poor people at Bedford was thus, in a kind of a vision, presented to me. I saw as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, whilst I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought also, between me and them I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain. Now, through this mountain my soul did greatly desire to pass; concluding that if I could, I would even go into the very midst of

them and there also comfort myself with the heat of their sun.

About this wall I bethought myself to go again and again, still prying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time: at the last, I saw as it were a narrow gap, like a little door-way in the wall, through which I attempted to pass; now the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many offers to get in, but all in vain, even until I was well-nigh quite beat out by striving to get in; at last, with great striving, methought I at first did get in my head, and after that, by a sideling striving, my shoulders and my whole body; then was I exceeding glad, and went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun.

Now, this mountain and wall, etc., was thus made out to me: the mountain signified the church of the living God; the sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of his merciful face on them that were therein; the wall I thought was that which did make separation betwixt the Christians and the world; and the gap which was in the wall, I thought was Jesus Christ, who is the way to God the Father. But forasmuch as the passage was wonderful narrow, even so narrow that I could not but with great difficulty enter in thereat, it showed me that none could enter into life but those that were in downright earnest, and unless also they left that wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin.

This resemblance abode upon my spirit many days; all which time I saw myself in a forlorn and sad condition, but yet was provoked to a vehement hunger and desire to be one of that number that did sit in the sunshine; now also would I pray wherever I was, whether at home or abroad, in house or field; and would also often, with lifting up of heart, sing that of the fifty-first Psalm, "O

Lord, consider my distress;" for as yet I knew not where I was.

Neither as yet could I attain to any comfortable persuasion that I had faith in Christ; but instead of having satisfaction here, I began to find my soul to be assaulted with fresh doubts about my future happiness; especially with such as these: "Whether I was elected;" "But how if the day of grace should be past and gone?"

Now was I in great distress, thinking in very deed that this might well be so: wherefore I went up and down bemoaning my sad condition; counting myself far worse than a thousand fools for standing off thus long, and spending so many years in sin as I had done; still crying out, "O that I had turned sooner! O that I had turned seven years ago!" It made me also angry with myself to think that I should have no more wit but to trifle away my time till my soul and heaven were lost.

But when I had been long vexed with this fear, and was scarce able to take one step more, these words broke in upon my mind: "Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled; and yet there is room." These words, but especially these, "and yet there is room," were sweet words to me; for truly I thought that by them I saw there was place enough in heaven for me, and moreover, that when the Lord Jesus spake these words, he did then think of me; and that he knowing that the time would come that I should be afflicted with fear that there was no place left for me in his bosom, did before speak this word and leave it upon record, that I might find help thereby against this vile temptation.

How lovely now in my eyes were all those that I thought to be converted men and women. They shone, they walked like a people that carried the broad seal of heaven about them. Oh, I saw the lot was fallen to them

in pleasant places, and they had a goodly heritage. But that which made me sick, was that of Christ in Mark 3 : 13, "He went up into a mountain, and called unto him whom he would; and they came unto him." This scripture made me faint and fear, yet it kindled fire in my soul That which made me fear was this, lest Christ should have no liking to me; for he called "whom he would." But Oh, the glory that I saw in that condition did still so engage my heart, that I could seldom read of any that Christ did call; but I presently wished, "Would I had been in their clothes; would I had been born Peter; would I had been born John; or would I had been by and had heard him when he called them, how would I have cried, 'O Lord, call me also.'" But Oh, I feared he would not call me.

FEARS ABOUT ELECTION.

Before thou canst know whether thou art elected, thou must believe in Jesus Christ so really, that by thy faith there shall be life begotten in thy soul—life from the condemning of the law; life from the guilt of sin; life over its filth; life also to walk with God in his Son and ways; the life of love to God the Father, to Jesus Christ his Son, to his saints, and to his ways, because they are holy, harmless, and altogether contrary to iniquity.

YOUNG CONVERTS.

In young converts, hope and distrust, or a degree of despair, do work and answer one another as doth the noise of the balance of the watch in the pocket. Life and death is always the motion of the mind then; and this noise continues until faith is stronger grown, and until the soul is better acquainted with the methods and ways of God with a sinner. Yea, was but a carnal man in a convert's heart, and could see, he should discern these two, to wit, hope

and fear, to have a continual motion in the soul—wrestling and opposing one another as do light and darkness, in striving for the victory.

And hence it is that you find such people so fickle and uncertain in their spirits; now on the mount, then in the valleys; now in the sunshine, then in the shade; now warm, then frozen; now bonny and blithe, then in a moment pensive and sad, as thinking of a portion nowhere but in hell.

In the general, all the days of our pilgrimage here are evil; yea, every day has a sufficiency of evil in it to destroy the best saint that breatheth, were it not for the grace of God. But there are also particular specious times, times more eminently dangerous and hazardous unto saints: As,

1. There are their young days, the days of their youth and childhood in grace. This day is usually attended with much evil towards him or them that are asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward. Now the devil has lost a sinner; there is a captive has broke prison, and one run away from his master; now hell seems to be awakened from sleep; the devils are come out, they roar, and roaring they seek to recover their runaway; they tempt him, threaten him, flatter him, stigmatize him, throw dust in his eyes, poison him with errors, spoil him while he is upon the potter's wheel; any thing to keep him from coming to Jesus Christ. And is not this a needy time? Doth not such a one want abundance of grace? Is it not of absolute necessity that thou, if thou art the man thus beset, shouldst ply it at the throne of grace for mercy and grace to keep thee in such a time of need as this?

To want a spirit of prayer now, is as much as thy life is worth. Oh, therefore, you that know what I say, you that are broke loose from hell, that are fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before you, and that do hear the

lion roar after you, and that are kept awake with the continual voice of his chinking chain, cry as you fly; yea, the promise is, that they that come to God with weeping, with supplication, he will lead them.

Well, this is one needy time; now thy hedge is low, now thy branch is tender, now thou art but in the bud. Pray that thou be not marred in the potter's hand.

XII. THE CHRISTIAN DESCRIBED.

HAPPINESS OF THE CHRISTIAN.

O how happy is he who is not only a visible, but also an invisible saint! He shall not be blotted out of the book of God's eternal grace and mercy.

DIGNITY OF THE CHRISTIAN.

There are a generation of men in the world, that count themselves men of the largest capacities, when yet the greatest of their desires lift themselves no higher than to things below. If they can with their net of craft and policy encompass a bulky lump of earth, Oh, what a treasure have they engrossed to themselves!

Meanwhile, the man who comes to God by Christ, has laid siege to heaven, has found out the way to get into the city, and is resolved, in and by God's help, to make that his own. Earth is a drossy thing in this man's account; earthly greatness and splendors are but like vanishing bubbles in this man's esteem. None but God as the end of his desires, none but Christ as the means to accomplish this his end, are things counted great by this man. No company now is acceptable to this man, but the Spirit of God, Christ, angels and saints, as fellow-heirs with himself. All other men and things, he deals with as strangers and pilgrims were wont to do. This man's mind soars higher

than the eagle, or stork of the heavens. He is for musing about things that are above and their glory, and for thinking what shall come to pass hereafter.

Is it so, that coming to Christ is by the Father? Then this should teach us to set a high esteem upon them that are indeed coming to Jesus Christ, for the sake of him by virtue of whose grace they are made to come to Jesus Christ.

We see that when men, by the help of human abilities, do arrive at the knowledge of, and bring to pass that which, when done, is a wonder to the world, how he that did it is esteemed and commended. Yea, how are his wits, parts, industry, and unweariedness in all, admired; and yet the man, as to this, is but of the world; and his work the effect of natural ability. The things also attained by him, end in vanity and vexation of spirit. Further, perhaps, in the pursuit of these his achievements, he sins against God, wastes his time vainly, and at long run loses his soul by neglecting of better things. Yet he is admired.

But, I say, if this man's parts, labor, diligence, and the like, will bring him to such esteem in the world, what esteem should we have of such a one that is, by the gift, promise, and power of God, coming to Jesus Christ?

1. This is the man with whom God is, in whom God works and walks—a man, whose motion is governed and steered by the mighty hand of God, and the effectual working of his power. Here is a man!

2. This man, by the power of God's might which worketh in him, is able to cast a whole world behind him, with all the lusts and pleasures of it, and to charge through all the difficulties that men and devils can set against him. Here is a man!

3. This man is travelling "to mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God; and to an in-

numerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, to God the judge of all, and to Jesus." Here is a man!

4. This man can look upon death with comfort, can laugh at destruction when it cometh, and long to hear the sound of the last trump, and to see the Judge coming in the clouds of heaven. Here is a man, indeed!

We pass through a threefold state from nature to glory; the state of grace in this life, the state of felicity in paradise, and our state in glory after the resurrection.

They are all kings that go to that world, and so shall be proclaimed there. They shall also be crowned with crowns, and they shall wear crowns of life and glory, crowns of everlasting joy, crowns of loving-kindness.

The coming man, the man that comes to God by Christ, if his way, all his way thither were strewed with burning coals, would choose, God helping him, to tread that path rather than to have his portion with them that perish.

"The angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear him, and delivereth them." This, therefore, is a glorious privilege of the men that fear the Lord. Alas, they are some of them so mean, that they are counted not worth taking notice of by the high ones of the world; but their betters do respect them: the angels of God count not themselves too good to attend on them, and camp about them to deliver them. This then is the man that hath his angel to wait on him, even he that feareth the Lord.

It is said, that when the church is "fair as the sun, and clear as the moon," she is "terrible as an army with banners." The presence of godly Samuel made the elders of Bethlehem tremble; yea, when Elisha was sought for by the king of Syria, he durst not engage him but with

chariots and horses, a heavy host. Godliness is a wonderful thing; it commandeth reverence, and the stooping of the spirit, even of the ungodly ones.

Godliness puts such a majesty and dread upon the professors of it, that their enemies are afraid of them; yea, even then when they rage against them, and lay heavy afflictions upon them. It is marvellous to see in what fear the ungodly are, even of godly men and godliness; in that they stir up the mighty, make edicts against them, yea, and raise up armies, and what else can be imagined, to suppress them; while the persons thus opposed, if you consider them as to their state and capacity in this world, are the most inconsiderable—but as a dead dog or a flea. O, but they are clothed with godliness; the image and presence of God is upon them. This makes the beasts of this world afraid. "One of you shall chase a thousand."

The ornament and beauty of this lower world, next to God and his wonders, are the men that spangle and shine in godliness.

THE FAMILY IN HEAVEN AND EARTH.

"The whole family in heaven and earth." The difference betwixt us and them is, not that we are really two, but one body in Christ, in divers places. True, we are below stairs, and they above; they in their holiday, and we in our working-day clothes; they in harbor, but we in the storm; they at rest, but we in the wilderness; they singing, as crowned with joy, we crying, as crowned with thorns. But we are all of one house, one family, and are all the children of one Father.

FEEBLENESS OF THE CHRISTIAN.

Israel, as the child of God, is a pitiful thing of himself; one that is full of weaknesses, infirmities, and defects,

should we speak nothing of his transgressions. He that is to be attended with so many mercies, absolutely necessary mercies, must needs be in himself a poor indigent creature. Should you see a child attended with so many engines to make him go, as the child of God is attended with mercies to make him stand, you would say, "What an infirm, decrepid, helpless thing is this!" Would you not say, "Such a one is not worth the keeping, and his father cannot look for any thing from him, but that he should live upon high charge and expense, as long as he liveth?" Why, this is the case. Israel is such a one, nay, a worse: he cannot live without tender mercy, without great mercy, without rich mercy, without manifold mercy. He cannot stand, if mercy doth not compass him round about, nor go, unless mercy follows him. Yea, if mercy that rejoiceth against judgment doth not continually flutter over him, the very moth will eat him up, the canker will consume him.

THE CHRISTIAN UNDER A SENSE OF GUILT—BUNYAN'S EXPERIENCE.

I had no sooner began to recall to my mind my former experience of the goodness of God to my soul, but there came flocking into my mind an innumerable company of my sins and transgressions; amongst which these were at this time most to my affliction, namely, my deadness, dulness, and coldness in holy duties; my wanderings of heart, my wearisomeness in all good things, and my want of love to God, his ways, and his people, with this at the end of all: "Are these the fruits of Christianity? Are these the tokens of a blessed man?" Now, I sunk and fell in my spirit, and was giving up all for lost; but, as I was walking up and down in the house, as a man in a most woful state, that word of God took hold of my heart, "Ye are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." But Oh, what a turn it made upon me.

Now was I as one awakened out of some troublesome

sleep and dream; and listening to this heavenly sentence, I was as if I had heard it thus spoken to me: "Sinner, thou thinkest that, because of thy sins and infirmities, I cannot save thy soul; but behold, my Son is by me, and upon him I look, and not on thee, and shall deal with thee according as I am pleased with him." At this I was greatly enlightened in my mind, and made to understand that God could justify a sinner at any time; it was but his looking upon Christ, and imputing his benefits to us, and the work was forthwith done.

And as I was thus in a muse, that scripture also came with great power upon my spirit, "Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." Now was I got on high; I saw myself within the arms of grace and mercy; and though I was before afraid to think of a dying hour, yet now I cried, "Let me die;" now death was lovely and beautiful in my sight, for I saw we should never live indeed till we reach the other world. Oh, methought, this life is but a slumber, in comparison of that above. At this time also I saw more in these words, "heirs of God," than ever I shall be able to express while I live in this world. *Heirs of God!* God himself is the portion of the saints. This I saw and wondered at, but cannot tell you what I saw.

Sometimes I have been so loaded with my sins, that I could not tell where to rest nor what to do; and at such times I thought it would have taken away my senses; but God, through grace, hath so effectually applied the atonement of Jesus to my poor wounded, guilty conscience, and I have found such a sweet, solid, sober, heart-comforting peace, that it hath made me rejoice exceedingly; and I have for a time been in a strait and trouble, that I should love and honor him no more, the virtue of whose blood hath so comforted my soul.

My sins have at times appeared so great, that I have

thought one of them as heinous as all the sins of all the men in the world. Reader, these things are not fancies, for I have smarted for this experience; yet the least believing view of the blood of Jesus hath made my guilt vanish to my astonishment, and delivered me into sweet and heavenly peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Sometimes when my heart hath been hard, slothful, blind, and senseless—which are sad frames for a poor Christian—then hath the precious blood of Christ softened, enlivened, quickened, and enlightened my soul.

When I have been loaded with sin and harassed with temptations, I had a trial of the virtue of Christ's blood, with a trial of the virtue of other things; and I have found that when tears, prayers, repentings, and all other things could not reach my heart, one shining of the virtue of his blood hath in a very blessed manner delivered me. It hath come with such life and power, with such irresistible and marvellous glory, as to wipe off all the slurs, silence all the outcries, and quench all the fiery darts and flames of hell-fire, that are begotten by the charges of the law, Satan, and doubtful remembrances of a sinful life.

SIN AND THE SAVIOUR.

Saints are sweetly sensible that the sense of sin and the assurance of pardon will make famous work in their poor hearts. Ah, what meltings without guilt; what humility without casting down; and what a sight of the creature's nothingness, yet without fear, will this sense of sin work in the soul. The sweetest frame, the most heart-endearing frame that possibly a Christian can get into while in this world, is to have a warm sight of sin and of a Saviour upon the heart at one time. Now it weeps not for fear and through torment, but by virtue of constraining grace and mercy, and is at this very time so far off of disquietness of heart by reason of the sight of its wickedness, that it is driven into an ecstasy by reason of the love and mercy

that is mingled with the sense of sin in the soul. The heart never sees so much of the power of mercy as now, nor of the virtue, value, and excellency of Christ in all his offices, as now; and the tongue is never so sweetly enlarged to proclaim and cry up grace as now: now will Christ come to be glorified in his saints and admired in them that believe.

Dost thou see in thee all manner of wickedness? The best way that I can direct a soul in such a case, is to place a steadfast eye on Him that is full, and so to look to him by faith as that thereby thou mayest draw his fulness into thy heart.

The best saints are most sensible of their sins, and most apt to make mountains of their molehills.

THE CHRISTIAN IN DARKNESS.

I know it is dreadful walking in darkness; but if that should be the Lord's lot upon me, I pray God I may have faith enough to stay upon him till death; and then will the clouds blow over, and I shall see him in the light of the living.

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

Then they went on again, and their conductor did go before them, till they came to a place where was cast up a pit the whole breadth of the way; and before they could be prepared to go over that, a great mist and a darkness fell upon them so that they could not see. Then said the pilgrims, "Alas, what now shall we do?" But their guide made answer, "Fear not; stand still, and see what an end will be put to this also." So they staid there, because their path was marred. Then they also thought they did hear more apparently the noise and rushing of the enemies; the fire also and smoke of the pit was much easier to be dis-

cerned. Then said Christiana to Mercy, "Now I see what my poor husband went through; I have heard much of this place, but I never was here before now. Poor man! he went here all alone in the night; he had night almost quite through the way; also these fiends were busy about him, as if they would have torn him in pieces. Many have spoke of it, but none can tell what the Valley of the Shadow of Death should mean until they come in themselves. The 'heart knoweth its own bitterness; a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy.' To be here is a fearful thing."

"This," said Mr. Greatheart, "is like doing business in great waters, or like going down into the deep; this is like being in the heart of the sea, and like going down to the bottom of the mountains; now it seems as if the earth with its bars were about us for ever. But let them that walk in darkness and have no light, trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God. For my part, I have often gone through this valley, and have been much harder put to it than now I am; and yet you see I am alive. I would not boast, for that I am not my own saviour; but I trust we shall have a good deliverance. Come, let us pray for light to Him that can lighten our darkness, and can rebuke not only these, but all the devils in hell." So they cried and prayed, and God sent light and deliverance.

THE CHRISTIAN DOUBTING.

It is a rare thing for some Christians to see their graces, but a thing very common for such to see their sins, yea, and to feel them too in their lusts and desires, to the shaking of their souls.

Question. But since I have lusts and desires both ways, how shall I know to which my soul adheres?

Answer. This may be known thus:

1. Which wouldest thou have prevail; the desires of the flesh, or the lusts of the spirit? Whose side art thou

of? Doth thy soul now inwardly say, and that with a strong indignation, "Oh, let God, let grace, let my desires that are good, prevail against my flesh, for Jesus Christ's sake?"

2. What kind of secret wishes hast thou in thy soul, when thou feelest the lusts of thy flesh to rage? Dost thou not inwardly, and with indignation against sin, say, "O that I might never, never feel one such motion more. O that my soul were so full of grace, that there might be no longer room for even the least lust to come into my thoughts?"

3. What kind of thoughts hast thou of thyself, now thou seest those desires of thine that are good so briskly opposed by those that are bad? Dost thou not say, "Oh, I am the basest of creatures; I could even spew at myself. There is no man in all the world, in my eyes, so loathsome as myself is. I abhor myself; a toad is not so vile as I am. O Lord, let me be any thing but a sinner; any thing, so thou subduest mine iniquities for me?"

4. How dost thou like the discovery of that which thou thinkest is grace in other men! Dost thou not cry out, "Oh, I bless them in my heart! Oh, methinks grace is the greatest beauty in the world! Yea, I could be content to live and die with those people that have the grace of God in their souls. A hundred times, and a hundred when I have been upon my knees before God, I have desired, were it the will of God, that I might be in their condition?"

5. How art thou, when thou thinkest that thou thyself hast grace? "Oh, then," says the soul, "I am as if I could leap out of myself; joy, joy, joy then is in my heart. It is, methinks, the greatest mercy under heaven to be made a gracious man."

And is it thus with thy soul indeed? Happy man! It is grace that has thy soul, though sin at present works in thy flesh. Yea, all those breathings are the very actings

of grace, even of the grace of desire, of love, of humility, and of the fear of God within thee. Be of good courage; thou art on the right side.

"I find," says the doubting Christian, "weakness and faintness as to my graces; my faith, my hope, my love and desires to these and all other Christian duties, are weak: I am like the man in the dream, that would have run, but could not; that would have fought, but could not, and that would have fled, but could not."

ANSWER. Weak graces are graces—weak graces may grow stronger; but if the iron be blunt, put to the more strength. Eccles. 10:10. Christ seems to be most tender of the weak: "He shall gather lambs with his arm, shall carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead them that are with young." Only here thy wisdom will be manifested, to wit, that thou grow in grace, and that thou use lawfully and diligently the means to do it. 2 Pet. 3:18; Phil. 3:10, 11; 1 Thess. 3:11–13.

I never heard a presumptuous man in my life say that he was afraid that he presumed; but I have heard many an honest, humble soul say that they have been afraid that their faith has been presumptive.

INDWELLING SIN.

A man, in mind and affections, may depart from that which yet will not depart from him, yea, a man in mind may depart from that which yet will dwell in him as long as he lives.

For instance, there are many diseases that cleave to men, from which in their minds they willingly depart; yea, their greatest disquietment is, that so bad a distemper will abide by them; and might they but have their desire accomplished, they would be as far therefrom as the ends of the earth are asunder: and while they are found to con-

tinue together, the mind departs therefrom, and is gone either to God or to physicians for help and deliverance from it.

And thus it is with the saint, and should be with every one that by way of profession nameth the name of Christ, Rom. 7; he should depart from his indwelling sin with his mind: "With his mind he should serve the law of God."

MR. FEARING.

HONEST. It seems he was well at last.

GREAT-HEART. Yes, yes; I never had a doubt about him. He was a man of a choice spirit; only he was always kept very low, and that made his life so burdensome to himself and so very troublesome to others. He was, above many, tender of sin; he was so afraid of doing injuries to others, that he would often deny himself of that which was lawful, because he would not offend.

HONEST. But what should be the reason that such a good man should be all his days so much in the dark?

GREAT-HEART. There are two sorts of reasons for it. One is, the wise God will have it so; some must pipe, and some must weep: now, Mr. Fearing was one that played upon the bass. He and his fellows sound the sackbut, whose notes are more doleful than the notes of other music are, though indeed some say the bass is the ground of music. And, for my part, I care not at all for that profession that begins not in heaviness of mind. The first string that the musician usually touches is the bass, when he intends to put all in tune; God also plays upon this string first, when he sets the soul in tune for himself. Only, there was the imperfection of Mr. Fearing, he could play upon no other music but this till towards his latter end.

HONEST. He was a very zealous man, as one may see by the relation which you have given of him. Difficulties, lions, or Vanity Fair, he feared not at all: it was only

sin, death, and hell that were to him a terror, because he had some doubts about his interest in that celestial country.

When he was come at the river where was no bridge, there he was in a heavy case. "Now, now," he said, "he should be drowned for ever, and so never see that face with comfort, that he had come so many miles to behold." And here I took notice of what was very remarkable—the water of that river was lower at this time than ever I saw it in all my life; so he went over at last, not much above wet shod. When he was going up to the gate, Mr. Great-heart began to take his leave of him, and to wish him a good reception above; so he said, "I shall, I shall;" then parted we asunder, and I saw him no more.

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE DOUBTING CHRISTIAN.

Doth this water of life run like a river, like a broad, full, and deep river? Then let no man, be his transgressions never so many, fear at all but there is enough to save his soul and to spare. Nothing has been more common to many, than to doubt the grace of God: a thing most unbecoming a sinner of any thing in the world. To break the law, is a fact foul enough; but to question the sufficiency of the grace of God to save therefrom, is worse than sin, if worse can be. Wherefore, despairing soul, for it is to thee I speak, forbear thy mistrusts, cast off thy slavish fears, hang thy misgivings as to this upon the hedge, and believe; thou hast an invitation sufficient thereto, a river is before thy face. And as for thy want of goodness and works, let that by no means daunt thee; this is a river of water of life, streams of grace and mercy. There is, as I said, enough therein to help thee, for grace brings all that is wanting to the soul. Thou, therefore, hast nothing to do—I mean as to the curing of thy soul of its doubts and

fears and despairing thoughts—but to drink and live for ever.

PRUDENCE. Can you remember by what means you find your annoyances, at times, as if they were vanquished?

CHRISTIAN. Yes; when I think on what I saw at the cross, that will do it; and when I look upon my embroidered coat, that will do it; and when I look into the roll that I carry in my bosom, that will do it; and when my thoughts wax warm about whither I am going, that will do it.

PRUDENCE. And what is it that makes you so desirous to go to mount Zion?

CHRISTIAN. Why, there I hope to see him alive that did hang dead on the cross, and there I hope to be rid of all those things that to this day are in me, an annoyance to me: there, they say, there is no death; and there shall I dwell with such company as I like best. For, to tell you the truth, I love him because I was by him eased of my burden; and I am weary of my inward sickness. I would fain be where I shall die no more, and with the company that shall continually cry, "Holy, holy, holy!"

Be often remembering what a blessed thing it is to be saved, to go to heaven, to be made like angels, and to dwell with God and Christ to all eternity.

ADOPTION.

The Spirit cannot, after he hath come to the soul as a Spirit of adoption, come again as a Spirit of bondage to put the soul into his first fear, to wit, a fear of eternal damnation, because he cannot say and unsay, do and undo. As a Spirit of adoption, he told me that my sins were forgiven me and I was included in the covenant of grace, that God was my Father through Christ, that I was under the promise of salvation, and that this calling and gift of God

to me are permanent and without repentance. And do you think that, after he told me this, and sealed up the truth of it to my precious soul, he will come to me and tell me that I am yet in my sins, under the curse of the law and the eternal wrath of God? No, no; the word of the gospel is not yea, yea; nay, nay. It is only yea and amen; it is so, "as God is true." 2 Cor. 17:20.

Sin, after that the Spirit of adoption has come, cannot dissolve the relations of Father and son, of Father and child. And this the church did rightly assert, and that when her heart was under great hardness and when she had the guilt of erring from his ways; saith she, "Doubtless thou art our Father:" doubtless thou art, though this be our case, and though Israel should not acknowledge us for such.

That sin dissolveth not the relation of Father and son, is further evident: When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, "Father, Father!" Now mark: "Wherefore, thou art no more a servant;" that is, no more under the law of death and damnation, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Suppose a child doth grievously transgress against and offend his father; is the relation between them therefore dissolved? Again, suppose the father should scourge and chasten the son for such offences, is the relation between them therefore dissolved? Yea, suppose the child should now, through ignorance, cry and say, "This man is now no more my father;" is he therefore no more his father? Doth not every body see the folly of arguings? Why, of the same nature is the doctrine, the faith, that after we have received the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of bondage is sent to us again to put us in fear of eternal damnation.

Know then that thy sin, after thou hast received the Spirit of adoption to cry unto God, "Father, Father," is counted the transgression of a child, not of a slave; and that all that happeneth to thee for that transgression is but the chastisement of a father: "And what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"

Now let not any, from what hath been said, take courage to live loose lives, under a supposition that once in Christ they are ever in Christ, and the covenant cannot be broken, nor the relation of Father and child dissolved; for they that do so, it is evident, have not known what it is to receive the Spirit of adoption. It is the spirit of the devil, in his own hue, that suggesteth this unto them, and that prevaileth with them to do so. Shall we do evil that good may come? Shall we sin that grace may abound; or shall we be base in life because God by grace hath secured us from wrath to come? God forbid: these conclusions betoken one void of the fear of God indeed, and of the Spirit of adoption too.

Though God cannot, will not dissolve the relation which the Spirit of adoption hath made betwixt the Father and the sons, for any sins that such do commit; yet he can and often doth take away from them the comfort of their adoption, not suffering children while sinning to have the sweet and comfortable sense thereof on their hearts.

God can lay thee in the dungeon in chains, and roll a stone upon thee; he can make thy feet fast in the stocks, and make thee a gazing-stock for men and angels.

God can tell how to cause to cease the sweet operations and blessed influences of his grace in thy soul; to make those gospel-showers that formerly thou hast enjoyed, to become now to thee nothing but powder and dust.

God can tell how to fight against thee with the sword of his mouth, and to make thee a butt for his arrows; and this is a dispensation most dreadful.

God can tell how to bow thee down with guilt and dis-

tress, that thou shalt in nowise be able to lift up thy head.

God can tell how to break thy bones, and to make thee, by reason of that, to live in continual anguish of spirit; yea, he can send a fire into thy bones that shall burn, and none shall quench it.

God can tell how to lay thee aside, and make no use of thee as to any work for him in thy generation. He can throw thee aside as a broken vessel.

God can tell how to kill thee, and take thee away from the earth for thy sins.

God can tell how to plague thee in thy death, with great plagues and of long continuance.

What shall I say? God can tell how to let Satan loose upon thee; when thou liest dying, he can license him then to assault thee with great temptations; he can tell how to make thee possess the guilt of all thy unkindness towards him, and that when thou, as I said, art going out of the world; he can cause that thy life shall be in continual doubt before thee, and not suffer thee to take any comfort day or night; yea, he can drive thee even to a madness with his chastisements for thy folly, and yet all shall be done by him to thee as a father chastiseth his son.

Further, God can tell how to tumble thee from off thy death-bed in a cloud, he can let thee die in the dark; when thou art dying, thou shalt not know whither thou art going, to wit, whether to heaven or to hell. Yea, he can tell how to let thee seem to come short of life, both in thine own eyes and also in the eyes of them that behold thee. "Let us therefore fear," says the apostle—though not with slavish, yet with filial fear—"lest, a promise being left us of entering into rest, any of us should seem to come short of it."

Now all this and much more can God do to his, as a father by his rod and a father by rebukes: ah, who know but those that are under them, what terrors, fears, dis-

tresses, and amazements, God can bring his people into? He can put them into a furnace, a fire, and no tongue can tell what, so unsearchable and fearful are his fatherly chastisements, and yet never give them the spirit of bondage again to fear. Therefore, if thou art a son, take heed of sin, lest all these things overtake thee and come upon thee.

Dost thou fear the Lord? "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on them that fear him."

Child of God, thou that fearest God, here is mercy nigh thee, mercy enough, everlasting mercy upon thee. This is long-lived mercy. It will live longer than thy sin; it will live longer than temptation; it will live longer than thy sorrows; it will live longer than thy persecutors. It is mercy from everlasting to contrive thy salvation, and mercy to everlasting to resist all thy adversaries. Now what can hell and death do to him that hath this mercy of God upon him? And this hath the man that feareth the Lord.

Take that other blessed word, and O, thou man that fearest the Lord, hang it like a chain of gold about thy neck: "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy to them that fear him." If mercy as big, as high, and as good as heaven itself will be a privilege, the man that feareth God shall have the privilege.

CHRIST OUR LIFE.

Here is my life, namely, the birth of this Man, the righteousness of this man, the blood of this man, the death and resurrection of this man, the ascension and intercession of this man for me, and the second coming of this man to judge the world in righteousness. I say, here is my life, if I see this by faith without me, through the operation of the Spirit within me: I am safe, I am at peace, I am comforted, I am encouraged; and I know that my comfort, peace, and encouragement is true, and given

me from heaven by the Father of mercies, through the Son of the Virgin Mary—the Son of man, the Son of God, the true God.

UNION WITH CHRIST.

Stay not in some transient comforts, but abide restless till thou seest a union betwixt thee and this blessed One, to wit, that he is a root and thou a branch—that he is head, and thou a member. And then shalt thou know that the case is so between thee and him, when grace and his Spirit have made thee to lay the whole stress of thy justification upon him, and have subdued thy heart and mind to be one spirit with him.

LIFE OF FAITH.

O man or woman, whoever thou art, that art savingly convinced by the Spirit of Christ, thou hast such an endless desire after the Lord Jesus Christ, that thou canst not be content with any thing below the blood of the Son of God to purge thy conscience withal; even that blood that was shed without the gates. Also thou canst not be at quiet, till thou dost see by true faith that the righteousness of the Son of Mary is imputed unto thee and put upon thee. Rom. 3 : 21–23. Then also thou canst not be at quiet, till thou hast power over thy lusts and corruptions, till thou hast brought them into subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ. Then thou wilt never think that thou hast enough of faith: no, thou wilt be often crying out, "Lord, give me more precious faith; Lord, more faith in thy righteousness; more faith in thy blood and death; more faith in thy resurrection; and, Lord, more faith in this—that thou art now at the right hand of thy Father in thy human nature, making intercession for me a miserable sinner." And then, O poor soul, if thou comest but hither, thou wilt never have an itching ear after another gospel.

If thou wouldst be faithful to do that work that God

has allotted thee to do in this world for his name labor to live in the savor and sense of thy freedom and liberty by Jesus Christ; that is, keep this, if possible, ever before thee—that thou art a redeemed one, taken out of this world and from under the curse of the law, out of the power of the devil, and placed in a kingdom of grace and forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake.

This is of absolute use in this matter; yea, so absolute that it is impossible for any Christian to do his work christianly, without some enjoyment of it.

The first thing of which the soul is sick, and by which the conscience receiveth wounding, is the *guilt* of sin and fear of the curse of God for it; for which are provided the wounds and precious blood of Christ, which flesh and blood, if the soul eat thereof by faith, give deliverance therefrom. Upon this the *filth* of sin appears most odious; for that it hath not only at present defiled the soul, but because it keeps it from doing those duties of love which by the love of Christ it is constrained to endeavor the perfecting of. For filth appears filth, that is, irksome and odious to a contrary principle now implanted in the soul; which principle had its conveyance thither by faith in the sacrifice and death of Christ going before. "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but to him that died for them and rose again."

The man that has received Christ desires to be holy, because the nature of the faith that lays hold on Christ worketh by love, and longeth, yea, greatly longeth, that the soul may be brought not only into a universal conformity to his will, but into his very likeness; and because that state agreeth not with what we are now, but with what we shall be hereafter: "Therefore in this we groan, being burdened" with that which is of a contrary nature,

"earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven;" which state is not that of Adam's innocency, but that which is spiritual and heavenly, even that which is now in the Lord in heaven.

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ, and for that he took our nature and sin and curse and death upon him; and for that he did also by himself, by one offering, purge our sins. We that have believed have found rest, even there where Christ and his Father have smelled a sweet savor of rest: because we are presented to God even now complete in the righteousness of him, and stand discharged of guilt even by the faith of him; yea, as sins past, so sins to come, were taken up and satisfied for by that offering of the body of Jesus. We who have had a due sense of sins, and of the nature of the justice of God, know that no remission of the guilt of any one can be, but by atonement made by blood. Heb. 9 : 22.

We also know that where faith in Jesus Christ is wanting, there can be neither good principle, nor good endeavor; for faith is the first of all graces, and without it there is nothing but sin. Rom. 14 : 23.

We know also that faith, as a grace in us, severed from the righteousness of Christ, is only a beholder of things, but not a justifier of persons; and that if it lay not hold of and applieth not that righteousness which is in Christ, it carries us no further than to the devils.

We know that this doctrine killeth sin, and curseth it at the very roots: I say, we know it, who have mourned over him whom we have pierced, and who have been confounded to see that God by his blood should be pacified towards us for all the wickedness we have done. Yea, we have a double motive to be holy and humble before him: one, because he died for us on earth; another, because he now appears for us in heaven, there sprinkling for us the mercy-seat with his blood, there ever living to make inter-

cession for them that come unto God by him. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins." Yet this works in us no looseness nor favor to sin, but so much the more an abhorrence of it: "She loveth much, for much was forgiven her;" yea, she weeps, she washeth his feet, and wipeth them with the hairs of her head, to the confounding of Simon the Pharisee, and all such ignorant hypocrites.

DIVINE LOVE IMPROVED.

Empty notions of the love of God and of Christ will do nothing but harm; wherefore they are not empty notions that I press thee to rest in, but that thou labor after the knowledge of the savor of this good ointment which the apostle calls "the savor of the knowledge of this Lord Jesus." Know it until it becomes sweet or pleasant to thy soul, and then it will preserve and keep thee. Make this love of God and of Christ thine own, and not another's. Many there are that can talk largely of the love of God to Abraham, to David, to Peter, and Paul. But that is not the thing. Give not over until this love be made thine own; until thou find and feel it to run warm in thy heart by the shedding of it abroad there, by the Spirit that God has given thee. Then thou wilt know it with an obliging and engaging knowledge; yea, then thou wilt know it with a soul-strengthening and soul-encouraging knowledge.

Wouldst thou improve this love of God and of Christ? then set it against the love of all other things whatsoever, even until this love shall conquer thy soul from the love of them to itself.

This is Christian. Do it therefore, and say, "Why should any thing have my heart but God, but Christ? He loves me with love that passeth knowledge. He loves me, and he shall have me; he loves me, and I will love him;

his love stripped him of all for my sake; Lord, let my love strip me of all for thy sake. I am a son of love, an object of love, a monument of love, of free love, of distinguishing love, of peculiar love, and of love that passeth knowledge; and why should not I walk in love? in love to God, in love to men, in holy love, in love unfeigned?"

This is the way to improve the love of God for thy advantage, for the subduing of thy passions, and for sanctifying of thy nature.

It is an odious thing to hear men of base lives talking of the love of God, of the death of Christ, and of the glorious grace that is presented unto sinners by the word of the truth of the gospel. Praise is comely for the upright, not for the profane.

Therefore let him speak of love that is taken with love, that is captivated with love, that is carried away with love. If this man speaks of it, his speaking signifies something; the powers and bands of love are upon him, and he shows to all that he knows what he is speaking of. But the very mentioning of love is, in the mouth of the profane, like a parable in the mouth of fools. Wherefore, Christian, improve this love of God as thou shouldst, and that will improve thee as thou wouldst.

It is natural for children to depend upon their father for what they want. If they want a pair of shoes, they go and tell him; if they want bread, they go and tell him: so should the children of God do. Do you want spiritual bread? Go tell God of it. Do you want strength of grace? Ask it of God. Do you want strength against Satan's temptations? Go and tell God of it. When the devil tempts you, run home and tell your heavenly Father; go pour out your complaints to God; this is natural to children—if any wrong them, they go and tell their father.

If thou wouldst improve this love of God and of Christ,

keep thyself in it: "Keep yourselves in the love of God." Living a holy life is the way, after a man has believed unto justification, to keep himself in the favor and comfort of the love of God. And O that thou wouldst indeed do so. And that because, if thou shalt want the savor of it, thou wilt soon want tenderness to the commandment, which is the rule by which thou must walk, if thou wilt do good to thyself, or honor God in the world. "To him that ordereth his conversation aright, I will show the salvation of God." He that would live a sweet, comfortable, joyful life, must live a very holy life.

All God's children are criers: Cannot you be quiet unless you are filled with the milk of God's word? cannot you be satisfied unless you have peace with God? Pray you consider it, and be serious with yourselves; if you have not these marks, you will fall short of the kingdom of God, you shall never have an interest there: there is no intruding: they will say, "Lord, Lord, open unto us;" and he will say, "I know you not." No child of God, no heavenly inheritance. O do not flatter yourselves with a portion among the sons, unless you live like sons. When we see a king's son playing with a beggar, this is unbecoming; so if you be the King's children, live like the King's children: if you be risen with Christ, set your affections on things above, and not on things below; when you come together, talk of what your Father promised you; you should all love your Father's will, and be content and pleased with the exercises you meet with in the world; if you are the children of God, live together lovingly; if the world quarrel with you, it is no matter, but it is sad if you quarrel together: if this be among you, it is a sign of ill-breeding; it is according to no rules you have in the word of God. Dost thou see a soul that has the image of God in him? Love him, love him; say, "This man and I must go to heaven one day;" serve one another, do good

for one another; if any wrong you, pray to God to right you, and love the brotherhood.

HOLY LIVING.

Remember, man, if the grace of God hath taken hold of thy soul, thou art a man of another world, and indeed a subject of another and more noble kingdom, the kingdom of God—which is the kingdom of the gospel, of grace, of faith, and righteousness, and the kingdom of heaven hereafter. In these things thou shouldst exercise thyself, not making heavenly things which God hath bestowed upon thee, stoop to things that are of the world; but rather here beat down the body, to mortify thy members, hoist up thy mind to the things that are above, and practically hold forth before all the world that blessed word of life.

Assure thyself, thy God will not give thee straw, but he will expect brick.

It is amiable and pleasant to God when Christians keep their rank, relation, and station, doing all as becomes their quality and calling. When Christians stand all in their places, and do the work of their stations, then they are like the flowers in the garden, that stand and grow where the gardener hath planted them; and then they shall both honor the garden in which they are planted, and the gardener that hath so disposed of them. From the hyssop in the wall to the cedar in Lebanon, their fruit is their glory. And seeing the stock into which we are planted is the most fruitful stock, the sap conveyed thereout the most fruitful sap, and the dresser of our souls the wisest husbandman, how contrary to nature, example, and expectation we should be, if we should not be rich in good works. Wherefore, take heed of being painted fire, wherein is no warmth; of being painted flowers, which retain no smell; and of being painted trees, whereon is no fruit. Whoso boasteth

himself of a false gift, is like clouds and wind without rain. Farewell; the Lord be with thy spirit, that thou mayest profit for time to come.

They only have benefit by Christ to eternal life, who die by his example as well as live by his blood; for in his death was both merit and example; and they are like to miss in the first, that are not concerned in the second.

As it is natural for the stranger, so soon as ever he has entered the gates of a city, to have his feet in the streets of the city, so it is natural for the sinner, so soon as ever he is entered into the church of Christ, to have his feet treading in the way and paths of holiness. Wherefore it is usual in the holy Scripture to call the transformation of the sinner from Satan to God a holy way, and also to admonish him that is so transformed to walk in that way, saying, Walk in the faith, love, spirit, and newness of life, and walk in the truth, ways, statutes, and judgments of God.

Jacob, when sick, would worship God, though so weak as not able to do it without leaning upon the top of his staff: a blessed example for the diligent, and reproof for those that are slothful.

OPPORTUNITIES IMPROVED.

Good opportunities are God's seasons for doing the work; wherefore, watch for them and take them as they come. Paul tells us, he was "in watchings often;" surely it was that he might take the season that God should give him to do his work for him; as he also says to Timothy, "Watch thou in all things, do the work," etc.

Opportunities as to some things come but once in one's lifetime, as in the case of Esther, and of Nicodemus and holy Joseph; when Esther begged the lives of the Jews, and the other the body of Jesus; which had they once let

slip or neglected, they could not have recovered it again for ever. Watch, then, for the opportunity:

Because it is God's season, which without doubt is the best season and time for every purpose.

Because Satan watches to spoil, by mistiming as well as by corrupting whatever thou shalt do for God. "When I would do good," says Paul, "evil is present;" that is, either to withdraw me from my purpose, or else to infect my work.

That the opportunity may not slip thee, either for want of care or forecast,

1. Sit always loose from an overmuch affecting thine own concernments, and believe that thou wast not born for thyself: a brother is born for adversity.

2. Get thy heart tenderly affected with the welfare of all things that bear the stamp and image of God.

3. Study thy own place and capacity that God hath put thee in in this world; for suitable to thy place are thy work and opportunities.

4. Make provision beforehand, that when things present themselves, thou mayst come up to a good performance; be prepared for every good work.

5. Take heed of carnal reasonings; keep the heart tender, but set thy face like a flint for God.

6. And look well to the manner of every duty.

GOOD WORKS.

To stoop low is a good work, if it be done in faith and love; though but by a cup of cold water, it is really more worth in itself, and of higher esteem with God, than all worldly and perishing glory.

When holiness is lovely and beautiful to the soul, and when the name of Christ is more precious than life, then will the soul sit down and be afflicted, because men keep not God's law. "I beheld the transgressors, and

was grieved, because they kept not thy word." Psalm 119 : 158.

The heart that is fullest of good works has in it the least room for Satan's temptations.

Souls rightly touched, will labor to draw not only their families, but a whole city after Christ. John 4 : 28, 29.

SELF-DENIAL.

If thou wouldst be faithful to do that work that God hath appointed thee to do in this world for his name, then beware thou do not stop and stick when hard work comes before thee. The word and Spirit of God come sometimes like chainshot to us, as if it would cut down all—as when Abraham was to offer up Isaac, and the Levites to slay their brethren. Oh, how willingly would our flesh and blood escape the cross for Christ! The comfort of the gospel, the sweetness of the promise, how pleasing is it to us! Like Ephraim, we like to tread out the corn, and to hear those pleasant songs and music that gospel sermons make, where only grace is preached and nothing of our duty as to works of self-denial. But as for such, God will tread upon their fair neck, and yoke them with Christ's yoke; for then they have a work to do, even a work of self-denial.

"Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Let him first sit down and count up the cost and the charge he is like to be at, if he follow me: for following of me is not like following of some other masters. The winds set always on my face; and the foaming rage of the sea of this world, and the proud and lofty waves thereof do continually beat upon the sides of the bark that myself, my cause, and my followers are in: he therefore that will not run hazards,

and that is afraid to venture a drowning, let him not set foot into this vessel.

Some, when they come at the cross, will either there make a stop and go no further, or else, if they can, step over it; if not, they will go round about. Do not thou do this, but take it up and kiss it, and bear it after Jesus.

Where is the man that walketh with his cross upon his shoulder? Where is the man that is zealous of moral holiness? Indeed, for those things that have nothing of the cross of the purse, or of the cross of the belly, or of the cross of the back, or of the cross of the vanity of household affairs—for those things, I find we have many, and very busy sticklers; but otherwise, the cross, self-denial, charity, purity in life and conversation, is almost quite out of doors among professors. But, man of God, do thou be singular as to these.

OBEDIENCE IN LITTLE THINGS.

Little things do ofttimes prove us most; for we, through the pride of our hearts, are apt to overlook little things, because, though commanded, they are but little.

Sometimes God would have men exact to a word, sometimes even to a tack or pin or loop, sometimes to a step. Be careful, then, in little things, but yet leave not the other undone.

MOTIVES TO HOLY LIVING.

When God shows a man the sin he has committed, the hell he has deserved, the heaven he has lost—and yet that Christ and grace and pardon may be had—this will make him serious, this will make him melt, this will break his heart, this will show him that there is more than air, than a noise, than an empty sound in religion; and this is the man whose heart, whose life, whose conversation and all,

will be engaged in the matter of the eternal salvation of his precious and immortal soul.

Though there are many mercies that lay an obligation upon men to be holy, yet he that shall want the obligation that is begotten by the faith of redeeming mercy, wanteth the main principle of true holiness; nor will any other be found sufficiently to sanctify the heart to the causing of it to produce such a life; nor can such holiness be accepted, because it comes not forth in the name of Christ. That which constrained David was forgiving and redeeming mercy, and that which constrained Paul was the love that Christ showed to him in dying for his sins and in rising from the dead.

Paul also beseecheth the Romans by the redeeming, justifying, preserving, and electing mercy of God, that they present their body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which, saith he, is your reasonable service. Hence all along, they that are exhorted to holiness in the New Testament, are exhorted to it upon the supposition of the benefit of redemption which they have received by Jesus Christ. Walk in love, as Christ loved us.

Can you give me some motive to self-denial? Yes, the Lord Jesus denied himself for thee: what sayest thou to that?

Oh, I have thought sometimes what bloody creatures hath sin made us. The beasts of the field must be slain by thousands before Christ came, to signify to us that we should have a Saviour; and after that, he must come himself and die a worse death than died those beasts, before the work of saving could be finished. O redemption, redemption by blood, is the heart-endearing consideration! This is that which will make the water stand in our eyes, that will break a heart of flint, and that will make

one do as they do that are in bitterness for their first-born.

Perhaps in the day of thy conversion thou wast more unruly than many. Like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, hardly tamed, thou wast brought home by strong hands. Thou wouldst not drive: the Lord Jesus must take thee up, lay thee upon his shoulder, and carry thee home to his Father's house. This should engage thy heart to study to advance the grace of God.

It may do thee no harm but good to cast an eye over thy shoulder, at those that now lie roaring under the vengeance of eternal fire; it may put thee in mind of what thou wast once, and of what thou must yet assuredly be, if grace by Christ preventeth not: keep then thy conscience awake with wrath and grace, with heaven and hell; but let grace and heaven bear sway.

Get thou thy soul possessed with the spirit of the Son, and believe thou art perfectly set free by him from whatsoever thou by sin hast deserved at the hand of revenging justice. This doctrine unlooseth thy hands, takes off thy yoke, and lets thee go upright; this doctrine puts spiritual and heavenly inclinations into thy soul, and the faith of this truth doth show thee that God hath so surprised thee and gone beyond thee with his blessed and everlasting love, that thou canst not but reckon thyself his debtor for ever. "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors not to the flesh, to live after the flesh." Rom. 8:12.

If thou wouldst be faithful to that work that God hath allotted thee to do in this world for his name, then labor to see a beauty and glory in holiness and in every good work; this tends much to the engaging of thy heart. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; fear before him all the

earth; and for thy help in this, think much on this in general, that "thus saith the Lord" is the wind-up of every command; for indeed much of the glory and beauty of duties doth lie in the glory and excellency of the person that doth command them; and hence it is, that "Be it enacted by the king's most excellent majesty" is the head of every law, that that law should therefore be reverenced by and be made glorious and beautiful to all. And we see upon this very account, what power and place the precepts of kings do take in the hearts of their subjects, every one loving and reverencing the statute because there is the name of their king. Will you rebel against the king? is a word that shakes the world. Well then, turn these things about for an argument to the matter in hand, and let the name of God, seeing he is wiser and better and of more glory and beauty than kings, beget in thy heart a beauty in all things that are commanded thee of God. And indeed, if thou do not in this act thus, thou wilt stumble at some of thy duty and work thou hast to do; for some of the commands of God are in themselves so mean and low, that take away from them the name of God and thou wilt do as Naaman the Syrian, despise instead of obeying. What is there in the Lord's supper, in baptism, yea, in preaching the word and prayer, were they not the appointments of God? His name being entailed to them makes them every one glorious and beautiful Wherefore no marvel if he that looks upon them without their title-page, goeth away in a rage like Naaman, preferring others before them. "What is Jordan? Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters in Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?" saith he. This was because he remembered not that the name of God was in the command. Israel's trumpets of rams'-horns, and Isaiah's walking naked, and Ezekiel's wars against a tile, would doubtless have been ignoble acts, but that the name of God was that which

gave them reverence, power, glory, and beauty. Set therefore the name of God and "thus saith the Lord" against all reasonings, defamings, and reproaches that either by the world or thy own heart thou findest to arise against thy duty; and let his name and authority alone be a sufficient argument with thee, to behold the beauty that he hath put upon all his ways, and to inquire in his temple.

Christians should so manage their time and the work that God hath appointed them to do for his name in this world, that they may not have part thereof to do when they should be departing this world; because, if they do not, dying will be a hard work with them, especially if God awakeneth them about their neglect of their duty. The way of God with his people is to visit their sins in this life; and the worst time for thee to be visited by them is when thy life is smitten down as it were to the dust of death, even when all natural infirmities break in like a flood upon thee—sickness, fainting, pains, wearisomeness, and the like: now, I say, to be charged also with the neglect of duty when in no capacity to do it—yea, when perhaps so feeble, as scarce able to abide to hear thy dearest friend in this life speak to thee—will not this make dying hard? yea, when thou shalt seem both in thine own eyes and also in the eyes of others, to fall short of the kingdom of heaven for this and the other transgressions; will not this make dying hard? David found it hard when he cried, "O spare me a little, that I may recover strength, before I go hence and be no more." David at this time was chastened for some iniquity, yea, brought for his folly to the doors of the shadow of death. But here he could not enter without great distress of mind; wherefore he cries out for respite, and time to do the will of God and the work allotted him. So again: "The pains of hell caught hold upon me, the sorrows of death compassed me about, and I found trouble and sorrow; then I cried unto the

Lord." Aye, this will make thee cry, though thou be as good as David. Wherefore learn by his sorrow, as he himself also learned at last to serve his own generation by the will of God, before he fell asleep. God can tell how to pardon thy sins, and yet make them such a bitter thing and so heavy a burden to thee that thou wouldst not, if thou wast but once distressed with it, come there again for all this world. Ah, it is easy with him to have this pardon in his bosom, even when he is breaking all thy bones and pouring out thy gall upon the ground—yea, to show himself then unto thee in so dreadful a majesty, that heaven and earth shall seem to thee to tremble at his presence. Let then the thoughts of this prevail with thee as a reason of great weight, to provoke thee to study to manage thy time and work in wisdom while thou art well.

OBEDIENCE REWARDED.

Keep those grounds and evidences that God hath given you of your call to be partakers of this love of Christ, with all clearness upon your hearts and in your minds. For he that lacks that sight of them, or a proof that they are true and good, can take but little comfort in this love. There is a great mystery in the way of God with his people. He will justify them without their works, he will pardon them for his Son's sake. But they that are careless, carnal, and not holy in their lives, shall have but little comfort of what he hath done, doth, and will do for them.

Nor shall they have their evidences for heaven at hand, nor out of doubt with them; yea, they shall walk without the sun, and have their comforts by bits and knocks; while others sit at their Father's table, have liberty to go into the wine-cellar, rejoice at the sweet and pleasant face of their heavenly Father towards them, and know it shall go well with them at the end.

Those that make conscience of walking in the com-

maudments of God, they shall be blessed with the bread of life, when others shall be hunger-bit.

The greatest part of professors nowadays take up their time in contracting guilt and asking for pardon, and yet are not much the better. Whereas, if they had but the grace to add to their faith, virtue, etc., they might have more peace, live better lives, and not have their heads so often in a bag, as they have. "To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God."

"And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years. And Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him." Enoch therefore lived here but a while: he was too good to live long in this world; the world was not worthy of him; neither could he be spared so long out of heaven, for God took him.

The end of walking with God, or the pathway thereof, leads men to heaven, to the enjoyment of the glory of God. Thus also it was with blessed Elijah; he followed God from place to place, till at length he was caught up into heaven.

Those that shall be found, in the day of their resurrection, the people of God most laborious for God while here, they shall at that day enjoy the greatest portion of God, or shall be possessed of most of the glory of the Godhead then. For that is the portion of the saints in general. And why shall he that doeth most for God in this world, enjoy most of him in that which is to come, but because by doing and acting, the heart and every faculty of the soul are enlarged and more capacitated, whereby more room is made for glory? Every vessel of glory shall at that day be made full of it: but every one will not be capable to contain a like measure; and so if they should have it communicated to them, would not be able to stand under it; for there

is an eternal weight in the glory that saints shall then enjoy; and every vessel must be at that day filled, that is, have its heavenly load of it.

SELF-EXAMINATION.

Examine: Dost thou labor after those qualifications that the Scriptures describe a child of God by—that is, faith, yea, the right faith, the most holy faith, the faith of the operation of God? And also, dost thou examine whether there is a real growth of grace in thy soul, as love, zeal, self-denial, and a seeking by all means to attain, if possible, to the resurrection of the dead; that is, not to satisfy thyself until thou be dissolved and rid of this body of death, and be transformed into that glory that the saints shall be in after the resurrection-day?

And in the mean time, dost thou labor and take all opportunities to walk as near as may be to the mark, though thou knowest thou canst not attain it perfectly? Yet I say, thou dost aim at it, seek after it, press towards it, and hold on in thy race; thou shunnest that which may any way hinder thee, and also closest in with what may any way further the same, knowing that that must be, or desiring that it should be, thine eternal frame; and therefore, out of love and liking to it, thou dost desire and long after it as being the thing that doth most please thy soul.

Or how is it with thy soul? Art thou such a one as regards not these things, but rather busiest thy thoughts about the things here below, following those things that have no scent of divine glory upon them? If so, look to thyself; thou art an unbeliever, and so under the wrath of God, and wilt for certain fall into the same place of torment that thy fellows have fallen into before thee, to the grief of thy own soul and thy everlasting destruction.

Consider and regard these things, and lay them to thy heart before it be too late to recover thyself, by repenting of the one and desiring to close in with the other.

Oh, I say, regard, regard; for hell is hot, God's hand is up, the law is resolved to discharge against thy soul. The judgment-day is at hand; the graves are ready to fly open; the trumpet is near the sounding; the sentence will ere long be past, and then you and I cannot call time again.

Reckon with thy own heart every day before thou lie down to sleep, and cast up what thou hast received from God and done for him, and where thou hast also been wanting. This will beget praise and humility, and put thee upon redeeming the day that is past; whereby thou wilt be able, through the continual supplies of grace, in some good measure to drive thy work before thee, and to shorten it as thy life doth shorten, and mayst comfortably live in the hope of bringing both ends sweetly together.

WATCHFULNESS.

He that will keep water in a sieve, must use more than ordinary diligence. Our heart is a leaky vessel; and therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

CONSTITUTION-SINS.

They that name the name of Christ, let them depart from their constitution-sin, or if you will, the sin that their temper most inclines them to. Every man is not alike inclined to the same sin, but some to one, and some to another. Now, let the man that professes the name of Christ religiously consider with himself, "Unto what sin or vanity am I most inclined? is it pride? is it covetousness? is it fleshly lust?" and let him labor by all means to leave off and depart from that. This is that which David called his own iniquity, and saith, "I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity." Psa. 18 : 23. Rightly are these two put to-

gether, for it is not possible that he should be an upright man that indulgeth or countenanceth his constitution-sin but on the contrary, he that keeps himself from that will be upright as to all the rest; and the reason is, because if a man has grace to trample upon and mortify his darling, his bosom, his only sin, he will more easily and more heartily abhor and fly the rest.

And indeed, if a man will depart from iniquity, he must depart from his darling sin first; for as long as that is entertained, the other, at least those that are most suiting to that darling, will always be haunting of him. There is a man that has such and such haunt his house and spend his substance, and would be rid of them, but cannot; but now, let him rid himself of that for the sake of which they haunt his house, and then he shall with ease be rid of them. Thus it is with sin. There is a man that is plagued with many sins, perhaps because he embraceth one; well, let him turn that one out of doors, and that is the way to be rid of the rest. Keep thee from thy darling, thy bosom, thy constitution-sin.

Among the motives to prevail with thee to fall in with this exhortation, are,

1. There can no great change appear in thee, make what profession of Christ thou wilt, unless thou cast away thy bosom sin. A man's constitution-sin is, as I may call it, his visible sin; it is that by which his neighbors know him and describe him, whether it be pride, covetousness, lightness, or the like. Now, if these abide with thee, though thou shouldst be much reformed in thy notions and in other parts of thy life, yet say thy neighbors, "He is the same man still: his faith has not saved him from his darling. He was proud before, and is proud still; was covetous before, and is covetous still; was light and wanton before, and is so still; he is the same man, though he has got a new mouth." But now, if thy constitution-sin be parted with, if thy darling be cast way, thy conversion is apparent; it

is seen of all: for the casting away of that is death to the rest, and ordinarily makes a change throughout.

2. So long as thy constitution-sin remains, as winked at by thee, so long thou art a hypocrite before God, let thy profession be what it will; also, when conscience shall awake and be commanded to speak to thee plainly what thou art, it will tell thee so, to thy no little vexation and perplexity.

THE CHRISTIAN PROFESSOR ADMONISHED.

O thou professor! thou lamp-carrier! have a care and look to thyself; content not thyself with only that which will maintain thee in a profession, for that may be done without saving grace; but I advise thee to go to Aaron, to Christ the trimmer of our lamps, and beg of him thy vessel full of oil, that is, grace for the seasoning of thy heart, that thou mayest have wherewith not only to bear thee up now, but at the day of the bridegroom's coming when many a lamp will go out and many a professor be left in the dark.

Sin is in the best of men; and as long as it is so, without great watchfulness and humble walking with God, we may be exposed to shame and suffering for it. It is possible for Christians to suffer for evil-doing, and therefore let Christians beware; it is possible for Christians to be brought to public justice for their faults, and therefore let Christians beware.

A Christian can never be overcome unless he should yield of himself.

There is no way to kill a man's righteousness but by his own consent. This Job's wife knew full well; hence she tempted him to lay violent hands on his own integrity. Job 2: 9.

FAILINGS AND SINS OF CHRISTIANS.

"And Noah began to be a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard. And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent."

This is the blot in this good man's scutcheon; and a strange blot it is, that such a one as Noah should be thus overtaken with evil. One would have thought that Moses would now have begun with a relation of some eminent virtues and honorable actions of Noah, since now he was delivered from the death that overtook the whole world; and was delivered, both he and his children, to possess the whole earth himself. Indeed, he stepped from the ark to the altar, as Israel of old did sing on the shore of the Red sea; but as they, *he* soon forgot; he rendered evil to God for good.

Neither is Noah alone in this matter. Lot also, being delivered from that fire from heaven which burnt up Sodom and Gomorrah, falls soon after into lewdness. Gideon also, after he was delivered out of the hands of his enemies, took that very gold which God had given him as the spoil of them that hated him, and made himself idols therewith.

What shall I say of David, and of Solomon also, who, after he had been twenty years at work for the service of the true God, both in building and preparing for his worship, and in writing proverbs by divine inspiration, did after this make temples for idols, yea, almost for the gods of all countries? Yea, he did it when he was old, when he should have been preparing for his grave and for eternity.

All these were sins against mercies, yea, and doubtless against covenants and the most solemn resolutions to the contrary. For who can imagine but that when Noah was tossed with the flood, and Lot within the scent and smell of the fire and brimstone that burned down Sodom with his sons and daughters, and Gideon, when so fiercely en-

gaged with so great an enemy, and delivered by so strange a hand, should in the most solemn manner both promise and vow to God? But behold, now they in truth are delivered and saved, they recompense all with sin: "Lord, what is man? how abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh in iniquity like water!"

Let these things teach us "to cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Indeed, it is a vain thing to build our faith upon the most godly man in the world, because he is subject to err; yea, better men than he have been so. If Noah and Lot and Gideon and David and Solomon—who wanted not matter from arguments, and that of the strongest kind, as arguments that are drawn from mercy and goodness be, to engage to holiness and the fear of God—yet, after all, did so foully fall as we see, let us admire grace that any stand; let the strongest fear, lest he fearfully fall; and let no man but Jesus Christ himself be the absolute platform and pattern of faith and holiness: as the prophet saith, "Let us cease from man."

THE BACKSLIDER.

None knows the things that haunt the backslider's mind; his new sins are all turned talking devils, threatening devils, roaring devils, within him. Besides, he doubts of the truth of his first conversion, consequently he has it lying upon him as a strong suspicion, that there was nothing of truth in all his first experience; and this also adds lead to his heels, and makes him come, as to sense and feeling, more heavily and with the greater difficulty, to God by Christ. As the faithfulness of other men kills him, he cannot see an honest, humble, holy, faithful servant of God, but he is pierced and wounded at the heart. "Aye," says he within himself, "that man fears God; that man hath faithfully followed God; that man, like the elect angels, has kept his place; but I am fallen from my station like a

devil. That man honoreth God, edifieth the saints, convinceth the world and condemneth them, and is become 'heir of the righteousness which is by faith.' But I have dishonored God, stumbled and grieved saints, made the world blaspheme, and, for aught I know, been the cause of the damnation of many." These are the things, I say, together with many more of the same kind, that come to him; yea, they will come with him, yea, and will stare him in the face, will tell him of his baseness and laugh him to scorn, all the way that he is coming to God by Christ—I know what I say—and this makes his coming to God by Christ hard and difficult to him. Shame covereth his face all the way he comes. He doth not know what to do; the God that he is returning to is the God that he has slighted, the God before whom he has preferred the vilest lusts; and he knows God knows it, and has before Him all his ways.

The man that has been a backslider, and is returning to God, can tell strange stories, and yet such as are very true. No man was in the whale's belly, and came out again alive, but backsliding and returning Jonah; consequently no man could tell how he was there, what he felt there, what he saw there, and what workings of heart he had when he was there, so well as he.

The returning again of the backslider gives a second testimony to the truth of man's state being by nature miserable, of the vanity of this world, of the severity of the law, certainty of death, and terribleness of judgment to come. His first coming to God by Christ told them so, but his second coming tells them so with a double confirmation of the truth. "It is so," saith his first coming; "*Oh, it* IS *so!*" saith his second.

The backsliding of a Christian comes through the overmuch persuading of Satan and lust, that the man was mistaken, and that there was no such horror in the things

from which he fled, nor so much good in the things to which he hasted. "Turn again, fool," says the devil, "turn again to thy former course. I wonder what frenzy it was that drove thee to thy heels, and that made thee leave so much good behind thee, as other men find in the lusts of the flesh and the good of the world. As for the law, and death, and an imagination of the day of judgment, they are but mere scarecrows, set up by polite heads to keep the ignorant in subjection." "Well," says the backslider, "I will go back again and see;" so, fool as he is, he goes back, and has all things ready to entertain him: his conscience sleeps, the world smiles, flesh is sweet, carnal company compliments him, and all that can be got is presented to this backslider to accommodate him. But behold, he doth again begin to see his own nakedness, and he perceives that the law is whetting his axe: as for the world, he perceives it is a bubble; he also smells the smell of brimstone, for God hath scattered it upon his tabernacle and it begins to burn within him. "Oh," saith he, "I am deluded; Oh, I am ensnared. My first sight of things was true. I see it so again." Now he begins to be for flying again to his first refuge: "O God," saith he, "I am undone; I have turned from thy truth to lies; I believed them such at first, and find them such at last: have mercy upon me, O God."

This, I say, is a testimony, a second testimony by the same man.

"And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." I shall here speak a word or two to him that is coming, after backsliding, to Jesus Christ for life.

Thy way, O thou sinner of a double dye, thy way is open to come to Jesus Christ. I mean thee, whose heart, after long backsliding, doth think of turning to him again. Thy way, I say, is open to him, as is the way of the other sorts of comers; as appears by what follows.

1. Because the text makes no exception against thee. It doth not say, "And any one but a backslider; any one but him." The text doth not thus object, but indefinitely openeth wide its golden arms to every coming soul, without the least exception. Therefore thou mayest come. And take heed that thou shut not that door against thy soul by unbelief, which God has opened by his grace.

2. Nay, the text is so far from excepting against thy coming, that it strongly suggesteth that thou art one of the souls intended, O thou coming backslider; else why need that clause have been so inserted, "I will in no wise cast out?" as if he should say, "Though those that come now are such as have formerly backslidden, I will in no wise cast away the fornicator, the covetous, the railer, the drunkard, or other common sinners, nor yet the backslider neither."

If thou yet, instead of repenting and doing thy first works, dost remain a backslider,

1. Then remember that thou must die; and remember also, that when the terrors of God, of death, and a backslidden heart meet together, there will be sad work in that soul: this is the man that hangeth tilting over the mouth of hell, while death is cutting the thread of his life.

2. Remember, that though God doth sometimes, yea, often, receive backsliders, yet it is not always so. Some draw back unto perdition; for, because they have flung up God and would none of him, he in justice flings up them and their souls for ever. Prov. 1 : 24–28.

XIII. THE CHRISTIAN RACE.

They that will go to heaven must run for it, because, as the way is long, so the time in which they are to get to the end of it is very uncertain; the time present is the only time: it may be thou hast no more time allotted thee than that thou now enjoyest: "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Do not say, I have time enough to get to heaven seven years hence; for I tell thee the bell may toll for thee before seven days more be ended; and when death comes, away thou must go, whether thou art provided or not; and therefore look to it—make no delays—it is not good dallying with things of so great concernment as the salvation or damnation of thy soul. You know, he that hath a great way to go in a little time, and less by half than he thinks of, he had need to run for it.

They that will have heaven must run for it, because the devil, the law, sin, death, and hell, follow them. There is never a poor soul that is going to heaven, but the devil, the law, sin, death, and hell make after that soul. "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." And I will assure you the devil is nimble; he can run apace, he is light of foot, he hath overtaken many, he hath turned up their heels, and hath given them an everlasting fall. Also the law, that can shoot a great way; have a care thou keep out of the reach of those great guns the ten commandments. Hell also hath a wide mouth; it can stretch itself further than you are aware of. And as the angel said to Lot, "Take heed; look not behind thee, neither tarry thou in all the plain"—that is, anywhere between this and the mountain—"lest thou be consumed;" so say I to thee, Take heed; tarry not, lest either the devil, hell, death, or the fearful curses of the law of God, do overtake thee and

throw thee down in the midst of thy sins; then thou, as well as I, wouldst say, They that will have heaven must run for it.

They that go to heaven must run for it, because, perchance, the gates of heaven may be shut shortly. Sometimes sinners have not heaven's gates open to them so long as they suppose, and if they be once shut against a man, they are so heavy that all the men in the world and all the angels in heaven are not able to open them. "I shut, and no man can open," saith Christ. And how if thou shouldst come but one quarter of an hour too late? I tell thee it will cost thee an eternity to bewail thy misery in. Francis Spira* can tell thee what it is to stay till the gate of mercy be quite shut; or to run so lazily that they be shut before thou get within them. What, to be shut out—what, out of heaven! Sinner, rather than lose it, run for it; yea, and "so run that thou mayest obtain."

Be not daunted though thou meetest with never so many discouragements in thy journey thither. That man that is resolved for heaven, if Satan cannot win him by flatteries, he will endeavor to weaken him by discouragements, saying, Thou art a sinner, thou hast broke God's law, thou art not elected, thou comest too late, the day of grace is past, God doth not care for thee, thy heart is naught, thou art lazy—with a hundred other discouraging suggestions. Then thou must encourage thyself with the freeness of the promises, the tender-heartedness of Christ, the freeness of

* Francis Spira, an eminent lawyer of Padua, Italy, flourished in the first half of the sixteenth century. He embraced the reformed religion, and advocated evangelical sentiments with very great zeal. But at length, terrified by the threats of the papal church, he made a public recantation of his religious opinions. His apostasy from the faith threw him into despair, and amid intolerable mental agonies, refusing all sustenance and comfort, and affirming his certain condemnation for having abjured the known truth, he miserably expired. See Sleidan's History of the Reformation, page 475.

his invitations to come in, the greatness of the sin of others that have been pardoned, and that the same God through the same Christ holdeth forth the same grace free as ever. If these be not thy meditations, thou wilt draw very heavily in the way to heaven if thou do not give up all for lost; therefore I say, take heart in thy journey, and say to them that seek thy destruction, "Rejoice not against me, O my enemy, for when I fall I shall arise, when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me."

Let me give thee a few motives along with thee. It may be they will be as good as a pair of spurs to prick on thy lumpish heart in this rich journey.

1. Consider there is no way but this; thou must either win or lose. If thou winnest, then heaven, God, Christ, glory, ease, peace, life, yea, life eternal, are thine; thou shalt be made equal to the angels in heaven; thou shalt sorrow no more, sigh no more, feel no more pain; thou shalt be out of the reach of sin, hell, death, the devil, the grave, and whatever else may endeavor thy hurt.

But contrariwise, if thou lose, then thy loss is heaven, glory, God, Christ, ease, peace, and whatever else tends to make eternity comfortable to the saints; besides, thou procurest eternal death, sorrow, pain, blackness and darkness, fellowship with devils, together with the everlasting damnation of thy own soul.

2. Consider that this devil, this hell, death, and damnation follow after thee as hard as they can, and have their commission so to do by the law, against which thou hast sinned; and therefore for thy soul's sake make haste.

3. If they seize upon thee before thou get to the city of refuge, they will put an everlasting stop to thy journey. This also cries, Run for it.

4. Know also, that now heaven-gates, the heart of Christ with his arms are wide open to receive thee.

O methinks that this consideration, that the devil followeth after to destroy, and that Christ standeth open-armed to receive, should make thee reach out and fly with all haste and speed!

5. Keep thine eyes upon the prize: be sure that thine eyes be continually upon the profit thou art like to get. The reason why men are so apt to faint in their race for heaven, lies chiefly in either of these two things:

(1.) They do not seriously consider the worth of the prize; or else if they do, they are afraid it is too good for them. Therefore keep thine eye much upon the excellency, the sweetness, the beauty, the comfort, the peace that is to be had there by those that win the prize.

(2.) And do not let the thoughts of the rareness of the place make thee say in thy heart, This is too good for me; for I tell thee, heaven is prepared for whosoever will accept of it, and they shall be entertained with hearty good welcome.

6. Think much of them that are gone before; how safe they are in the arms of Jesus. Would they be here again for a thousand worlds? Or if they were, would they be afraid that God would not make them welcome? What would they judge of thee if they knew thy heart began to fail thee in thy journey, or thy sins began to allure thee and to persuade thee to stop thy race? Would they not call thee a thousand fools, and say, O that he did but see what we see, feel what we feel, and taste of the dainties that we taste of? O if he were one quarter of an hour to behold, to feel, to taste, and enjoy but the thousandth part of what we enjoy, what would he do? What would he suffer? What would he leave undone? Would he favor sin? Would he love this world below? Would he be afraid of friends, or shrink at the most fearful threatenings that the greatest tyrants could invent to give him? Nay, those who have had but a sight of these things by faith, when they have been as far off from them as heaven from earth

yet they have been able to say with a comfortable and merry heart as the bird that sings in the spring, that this and more shall not stop them from running to heaven. Sometimes when my base heart hath been inclining to this world, and to loiter in my journey towards heaven, the very consideration of the glorious saints and angels in heaven hath caused me to rush forward—to disdain these poor, low, empty, beggarly things, and say to my soul, Come soul, let us not be weary; let us see what this heaven is; let us even venture all for it, and try if that will quit the cost. Surely Abraham, David, Paul, and the rest of the saints of God, were as wise as any are now, and yet they lost all for this glorious kingdom.

7. To encourage thee a little further, set to work, and when thou hast run thyself down weary, then the Lord Jesus will take thee up and carry thee. Is not this enough to make any poor soul begin his race? Thou perhaps criest, "O, but I am feeble, I am lame;" well, but Christ has a bosom; consider, therefore, when thou hast run thyself down weary, he will put thee in his bosom. "He shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom." This is the way that fathers take to encourage their children, saying, Run, sweet babe, until thou art weary, and then I will take thee up and carry thee.

8. Or else he will convey new strength from heaven into thy soul.

9. Again, methinks the very industry of the devil, and the industry of his servants, should make you that have a desire to heaven and happiness, run apace. Why, the devil he will lose no time, spare no pains, also neither will his servants, both to seek the destruction of themselves and others; and shall not we be as industrious for our own salvation? Shall the world venture the damnation of their souls for a poor corruptible crown, and shall not we venture the loss of a few trifles for an eternal crown? Shall they venture the loss of eternal friends, as God to love,

Christ to redeem, the Holy Spirit to comfort, heaven for habitation, saints and angels for company, and all this to get and hold communion with sin and this world, and a few base wretches like themselves? And shall not we labor as hard, run as fast, seek as diligently, nay, a hundred times more diligently, for the company of these glorious eternal friends, though with the loss of such as these, nay, with the loss of a thousand times better than these poor, low, base, contemptible things? Shall it be said at the last day, that wicked men made more haste to hell than you did make to heaven; that they spent more hours, days, and that early and late, for hell, than you spent for that which is ten thousand thousand of thousand times better? O let it not be so, but run with all might and main.

Is the soul such an excellent thing, and is the loss thereof so unspeakably great? Then this commends those for the wise ones that above all business concern themselves with the salvation of their souls; those that make all other matters but things by the by, and the salvation of their soul the one thing needful.

Let me then encourage those that are of this mind to be strong and hold on their way. Soul, thou hast chosen right; I will say of thy choice, as David said of Goliath's sword, "There is none like that, give it me."

But who told thee that thy soul was such an excellent thing as by thy practice thou declarest thou believest it to be? What, set more by thy soul than by all the world? What, cast a world behind thy back for the welfare of a soul! Is not this to play the fool in the account of sinners, while angels wonder at and rejoice for thy wisdom?

What a thing is this, that thy soul and its welfare should be more in thy esteem than all these glories wherewith the eyes of the world are dazzled! Surely, thou hast looked upon the sun, and that makes gold look like a clod of clay in thine eyesight.

But who put the thoughts of the excellencies of the things that are eternal—I say, who put the thoughts of the excellency of those things into thy mind in this wanton age, in an age wherein the thoughts of eternal life and the salvation of the soul are with too many like the Morocco ambassador* and his men of strange faces, in strange habits, with strange gestures and behaviors, monsters to behold?

But where hadst thou that heart that gives entertainment to these thoughts, these heavenly thoughts? These thoughts are like the French Protestants,† banished thence

* "The Morocco ambassador." Evelyn, who lived in the times of Charles I., Cromwell, Charles II., and William, refers in his "Diary" to this ambassador, named Hamet. When presented to the king, he and his retinue were "clad in the Moorish habite, cassocks of colored cloth or silk, with buttons and loopes; over this an *alhaga* or white woolen mantle, so large as to wrap both head and body; a shash or small turban; naked legg'd and armed, but with leather socks like the Turks; rich scymeters, and large calico-sleeved shirts. The ambassador had a string of pearls oddly woven in the turban. Their presents were lions and estridges (ostriches.) But the concourse and tumult of the people was intolerable, so as the officers could keep no order."

† By the famous edict of Nantes, which was granted the Huguenots by Henry IV., they were allowed liberty of conscience and the free exercise of religion. Louis XIV., grandson of Henry, after a series of arbitrary infractions of that edict by his father and himself at the instigation of the Jesuits, at length in 1685 abrogated it, and banished the Protestants from the kingdom under circumstances of aggravated cruelty. Great numbers of them were dispersed through all the countries of Europe. Evelyn, in his Diary, says that in 1685, "there had now been numbered to passe through Geneva onely forty thousand towards Swisserland. In Holland, Denmark, and all Germany were dispersed some hundred thousands, besides those in England." In the Memoirs of the Reformation in France prefixed to Saurin's Sermons, it is stated that eight hundred thousand were banished from France, and that they carried with them more than twenty millions of property. The refugees charged their sufferings on the *religion* of Rome, for Pope Innocent XI. highly approved of this persecution. He wrote a brief to the king, assuring him that what he had done against the heretics of his kingdom would be immortalized by the eulogies of the

where they willingly would have harbor: how came they to thy house, to thy heart, and to find entertainment in thy soul? The Lord keep them in every imagination of the thoughts of thy heart for ever, and incline thine heart to seek him more and more.

And since the whole world have slighted and despised and counted foolish the thoughts wherewith thy soul is exercised, what strong and mighty supporter is it upon and with which thou bearest up thy spirit, and takest encouragement in this thy forlorn, unoccupied, and singular way, for so I dare say it is with the most? But certainly it is something above thyself, and that is more mighty to uphold thee than is the power, rage, and malice of all the world to cast thee down, or else thou couldst not bear up, now the stream and the force thereof are against thee.

Objection. "I know my soul is an excellent thing, and that the world to come and its glories, even in the smallest glimpse thereof, do swallow up all the world that is here; my heart also doth greatly desire to be exercised about the thoughts of eternity, and I count myself never better than when my poor heart is filled with them; and as for the rage and fury of this world, it swayeth very little with me, for my heart is come to a point; but yet for all that, I meet with many discouragements, and such things as indeed do weaken my strength in the way."

But, brave soul, pray tell me what the things are that discourage thee, and that weaken thy strength in the way.

"Why, the amazing greatness of this my enterprise. I

Catholic church. He delivered a discourse in the Consistory in 1689, in which he said, "The most Christian king's zeal and piety did wonderfully appear in extirpating heresy." He ordered the *Te Deum* to be sung. Evelyn says, "I was show'd the harangue which the bishop of Valentia on Rhone made in the name of the clergie, celebrating the French king for persecuting the poor Protestants; with this expression in it: 'His victory over heresy was greater than all the conquests of Alexander and Cæsar.'"

am now pursuing things of the highest, the greatest, the most enriching nature, even eternal things; and the thoughts of the greatness of them drowned me: for when the heat of my spirit in the pursuit after them is a little returned and abated, methinks I hear myself talking thus to myself: Fond fool, canst thou imagine that such a gnat, a flea as thou art, can take and possess the heavens, and mantle thyself up in the eternal glories? If thou makest first a trial of the successfulness of thy endeavors upon things far lower, more base, but much more easy to obtain, as crowns, kingdoms, earldoms, dukedoms, gold, silver, or the like, how vain are these attempts of thine, and yet thou thinkest to possess thy soul of heaven. Away, away! by the height thereof, thou mayest well conclude it is far above, out of thy reach; and by the breadth thereof, it is too large for thee to grasp; and by the nature of the excellent glory thereof, too good for thee to possess. These are the thoughts that sometimes discourage me, and that weaken my strength in the way."

Answer. The greatness of thy undertakings does but show the nobleness of thy soul, in that it cannot, will not be content with such low and dry things as the base-born spirits that are in the world can and do content themselves withal.

And as to the greatness of the things thou aimest at, though they be, as they are indeed, things that have not their like, yet they are not too big for God to give; and he has promised to give them to the soul that seeketh him; yea, he hath prepared the kingdom, and laid up in the kingdom of heaven the things that thy soul longeth for, presseth after, and cannot be content without.

Art thou got into the right way? Art thou in Christ's righteousness? Do not say, Yes, in thy heart, when in truth there is no such matter. It is a dangerous thing, you know, for a man to think he is in the right way, when he is in

the wrong. It is the next way for him to lose his way; and not only so, but if he run for heaven, as thou sayest thou dost, even to lose that too. O this is the misery of most men, to persuade themselves that they are right, when they never had one foot in the way! The Lord give thee understanding here, or else thou art undone for ever. Prithee, soul, search when it was thou turnedst out of thy sins and righteousness into the righteousness of Jesus Christ. I say, dost thou see thyself in him; and is he more precious to thee than the whole world? Is thy mind always musing on him; and lovest thou to be walking with him? Dost thou count his company more precious than the whole world? Dost thou count all things but poor, lifeless, empty, vain things, without communion with him? Doth his company sweeten all things; and his absence imbitter all things? Soul, I beseech thee be serious, and lay it to heart, and do not take things of such weighty concernment as the salvation or damnation of thy soul. without good ground.

Art thou unladen of the things of this world; as pride, pleasures, profits, lusts, vanities? What, dost thou think to run fast enough, with the world, thy sins and lusts in thy heart? I tell thee, soul, they that have laid all aside, every weight, every sin, and are got into the nimblest posture, they find work enough to run; so to run as to hold out. To run through all the opposition, all the jostles, all the rubs, over all the stumbling-blocks, over all the snares, from all the entanglements that the devil, sin, the world, and their own hearts lay before them—I tell thee, if thou art going heavenward, thou wilt find it no small or easy matter.

Art thou therefore discharged or unladen of these things? Never talk of going to heaven if thou art not. It is to be feared thou wilt be found among the "many that shall seek to enter in and shall not be able." If so, then in the next place, what will become of them that are grown weary

before they are got half-way thither? Why, man, it is he that holdeth out to the end, that must be saved; it is he that overcometh, that shall inherit all things; it is not every one that begins. Agrippa took a fair step for a sudden; he steps almost into the bosom of Christ in less than half an hour. "Almost," saith he to Paul, "thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Ah, it was but *almost;* and so he had as good have never been *a whit;* he stepped fair indeed, but yet he stepped short; he was hot while he was at it, but he was quickly out of wind. O this *but almost!* I tell you, this *but almost* lost his soul. Methinks I have seen sometimes how these poor wretches that get but almost to heaven, how fearfully their almost and their but almost will torment them in hell; when they shall cry out in the bitterness of their souls, saying, "Almost a Christian. I was almost got into the kingdom, almost out of the hands of the devil, almost out of my sins, almost from under the curse of God; almost, and that was all; almost, but not altogether. O that I should be almost at heaven, and should not go quite through!" Friend, it is a sad thing to sit down before we are in heaven, and to grow weary before we come to the place of rest; and if it should be thy case, I am sure thou dost not so run as to obtain.

Evangelist. The crown is before you, and it is an incorruptible one; "So run, that you may obtain it." Some there be that set out for this crown, and after they have gone far for it, another comes in and takes it from them: "Hold fast, therefore, that ye have; let no man take your crown:" you are not yet out of the gunshot of the devil; "you have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin:" let the kingdom be always before you, and believe steadfastly concerning things that are invisible; let nothing that is on this side the other world get within you; and, above all, look well to your own hearts and to the lusts thereof, for they are "deceitful above all things, and des-

perately wicked:" set your faces like a flint; you have all power in heaven and earth on your side.

Though the way to heaven be but one, yet there are many crooked lanes and by-paths that shoot down upon it, as I may say. And again, notwithstanding the kingdom of heaven be the chief city, yet usually those by-paths are most beaten, most travellers go those ways; and therefore the way to heaven is hard to be found, and as hard to be kept in, by reason of these. Yet, nevertheless, it is in this case as it was with the harlot of Jericho; she had one scarlet thread tied in her window, by which her house was known: so it is here; the scarlet streams of Christ's blood run throughout the way to the kingdom of heaven; therefore mind that: see if thou do find the besprinkling of the blood of Christ in the way; and if thou do, be of good cheer, thou art in the right way.

XIV. TRIALS OF THE CHRISTIAN.

AFFLICTION—ITS NATURE AND BENEFITS.

The school of the cross is the school of light; it discovers the world's vanity, baseness, and wickedness, and lets us see more of God's mind. Out of dark afflictions comes a spiritual light.

In times of affliction, we commonly meet with the sweetest experiences of the love of God.

The end of affliction is the discovery of sin; and of that, to bring us to a Saviour.

Doth not God ofttimes even take occasion, by the hardest of things that come upon us, to visit our souls with the

comforts of his Spirit, to lead us into the glory of his word, and to cause us to savor that love that he has had for us, even from before the world began till now? A nest of bees and honey did Samson find even in the belly of that lion that roared upon him. And is all this no good; or can we do without such holy appointments of God? Let these things be considered by us, and let us learn like Christians to kiss the rod, and love it.

The lamps of Gideon were discovered, when his soldiers' pitchers were broken: if our pitchers are broken for the Lord and his gospel's sake, those lamps will then be discovered that before lay hid and unseen.

People that live high and in idleness bring diseases upon the body; and they that live in all fulness of gospel ordinances, and are not exercised with trials, grow gross, are diseased and full of bad humors in their souls.

The righteous are apt to be like well-fed children, too wanton, if God should not appoint them some fasting-days.

The Lord useth his flail of tribulation to separate the chaff from the wheat.

Observe Paul: he died daily, he was always delivered unto death, he despaired of life. And this is the way to be prepared for any calamity. When a man thinks he has only to prepare for an assault by footmen, how shall he contend with horses; or if he looks no further than to horses, what will he do at the swellings of Jordan?

Oh, when every providence of God unto thee is like the messengers of Job, and the last to bring more heavy tidings than all that went before him; when life, estate, wife, children, body and soul, and all at once, seem to be struck

at by heaven and earth, here are hard lessons—now to behave myself even as a weaned child: now to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Our afflictions work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Our afflictions do it, not only because there is laid up a reward for the afflicted according to the measure of affliction, but because afflictions, and so every service of God, make the heart more deep, more experimental, more knowing and profound, and so, more able to hold, to contain, and bear more.

Let Christians beware that they set not times for God, lest all men see their folly. "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power;" yea, I say again, take heed lest, for thy setting of God a seven-day's time, he set thee so many as seven times seven.

God's time is the time, the best time, because it is the time appointed by him for the proof and trial of our graces, and that in which so much of the rage of the enemy and of the power of God's mercy, may the better be discovered unto us. "I the Lord do hasten it in his time;" not before, though we were the signet upon his hand.

Afflictions are governed by God, both as to time, number, nature, and measure. In measure, when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: "He stayeth his rough wind in the day of his east wind." Our times, therefore, and our conditions in these times, are in the hand of God, yea, and so are our souls and bodies, to be kept and preserved from the evil while the rod of God is upon us.

Ease and release from persecution and affliction come not by chance, or by the good moods and gentle dispositions

of men; but the Lord doth hold them back from sin, the Lord restraineth them. 2 Chron. 18 : 31.

"And he stayed yet other seven days." It is not God's way with his people to show them all their troubles at once, but first he shows them a part: first, forty days, after that, seven other days, and yet again, seven days more; that coming upon them by piecemeal, they may the better be able to travel through them. When Israel was in affliction in Egypt, they knew not the trial which would meet them at the Red sea. Again, when they had gone through that, they little thought that yet for forty years they must be tempted and proved in the wilderness.

"And Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked;" the failing again of his expected comforter caused him to be up and doing. Probably he had not as yet uncovered the ark, that is, to look round about him, if the dove, by returning, had pleased his humor; but she failing, he stirs up himself.

Thus it should also be with the Christian now. Doth the dove forbear to come to thee with a leaf in her bill as before? Let not this make thee sullen and mistrustful, but uncover the ark and look; and by looking, thou shalt see a further testimony of what thou receivest by the first manifestations. "He looked, and behold the earth was dry."

God doth not let us see the hills for our help before we have first of all seen them drowned. Look not to them, therefore, while the water is at the rising; but if they begin to cease their raging, if they begin to fall, and with that the tops of the mountains be seen, you may look upon them with comfort; they are tokens of God's deliverance. Gen. 8.

It was requisite that the hills, Gen. 7 : 19, should be

covered, that Noah might not have confidence in them; but surely this dispensation of God was a heart-shaking providence to Noah and them that were with him; for here indeed was his faith tried, there was no hill left in all the world; now were his carnal helpers gone, there was none shut up or left. Now therefore, if they could rejoice, it must be only in the power of God.

Noah was to have respect in his deliverance not only to himself and family, but to the good of all the world. Men's spirits are too narrow for the mind of God, when their chief end, or their only design in their enjoying this or the other mercy, is for the sake of their own selves only. It cannot be according to God, that such desires should be encouraged. "None of us liveth unto himself;" why, then, should we desire life only for ourselves?

The church cries out thus: "God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us." Why? "That thy way may be known upon earth, and thy saving health among all nations." So David: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit; then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

So then, we must not desire to come out of trials and afflictions alone or by ourselves, but that in our deliverance the salvation of many may be concerned.

In every affliction and persecution, the devil's design is to impair Christ's kingdom; wherefore, no marvel that God designs in our deliverance the impairing and lessening the kingdom of sin and Satan. Wherefore, O thou church of God, which art now upon the waves of affliction and temptation, when thou comest out of the furnace, if thou come out at the bidding of God, there shall come out with thee the fowl, the beast, and abundance of creeping things. Gen. 8 : 17. "O Judah, he hath set a harvest for thee, when I returned the captivity of my people."

PERSECUTION.

There are several degrees of suffering for righteousness: there is the scourge of the tongue, the ruin of an estate, the loss of liberty, a jail, a gibbet, a stake, a dagger. Now answerable to these are the comforts of the Holy Ghost prepared, like to like, part proportioned to part; only the consolations are said to abound. 2 Cor. 1 : 5.

But the lighter the sufferings are, the more difficult it is to judge of the comforts of the Spirit of God; for it is common for a man to be comfortable under sufferings when he suffereth but little, and knows also that his enemy can touch his flesh, his estate, or the like, but little. And this may be the joy of the flesh, the result of reason; and may be very much, if not altogether, without a mixture of the joy of the Holy Ghost therewith. The more deep, therefore, and the more dreadful the sufferings are, the more clearly are seen the comforts of the Spirit. When a man has comfort where the flesh is dead, stirreth not, and can do nothing; when a man can be comfortable at the loss of all; when he is under sentence of death, or at the place of execution—if yet a man's cause, a man's conscience, the promise, and the Holy Ghost, have all one comfortable voice, and do all together with their trumpets make one sound in the soul, then good are the comforts of God and his Spirit.

There are several degrees of sufferings; wherefore it is not to be expected that he that suffers but little should partake of the comforts that are prepared for them that suffer much. He that has only the scourge of the tongue, knows not what are the comforts that are prepared for him that meets with the scourge of the whip. And how should a man know what manner of comforts the Holy Ghost doth use to give at the jail and the gibbet, when himself for righteousness never was there?

Persecution of the godly was never intended of God for

their destruction, but for their glory, and to make them shine the more when they are beyond this valley of the shadow of death.

We that are Christians have been trained up by his Son in his school this many a day, and have been told what a God our Father is, what an arm he has, and with what a voice he can thunder; how he can deck himself with majesty and excellency, and array himself with beauty and glory; how he can cast abroad the rage of his wrath, and behold every one that is proud and abase him. Have we not talked of what he did at the Red sea and in the land of Ham, many years ago; and have we forgot him now? Have we not vaunted and boasted of our God, both in church, pulpit, and books, and spake to the praise of them that attempted to drive antichrist out of the world with their lives and their blood instead of stones; and are we afraid of our God? He was God, a Creator, then; and is he not God now? and will he not be as good to us as to them that have gone before us? or would we limit him to appear in such ways as only smile upon our flesh, and have him stay and not show himself in his heart-shaking dispensations until we are dead and gone? What if we must now go to heaven, and what if he is thus come to fetch us to himself? If we have been as wise as serpents and innocent as doves—if we can say, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor against Cæsar, have we offended any thing at all—of what should we be afraid? Let heaven and earth come together; I dare say they will not hurt us.

Religion that is pure is a hot thing; and it usually burns the fingers of those that fight against it.

Ah, when God makes the bed, he must needs lie easy whom weakness hath cast thereon: a blessed pillow hath

that man for his head, though to all beholders it is hard as a stone. Psa. 41 : 1–3.

It is as ordinary as for the light to shine, for God to make black and dismal dispensations usher in bright and pleasing.

Christian reader, let me beg of thee that thou wilt not be offended either with God or men, if the cross is laid heavy upon thee. Not with God, for he doeth nothing without a cause; nor with men, for they are the hand of God: and will they, nill they, they are the servants of God to thee for good. Psa. 17 : 14; Jer. 24 : 5. Take, therefore, what comes from God by them thankfully. If the messenger that brings it is glad that it is in his power to do thee hurt and to afflict thee, if he skips for joy at thy calamity, be sorry for him, pity him, and pray to thy Father for him: he is ignorant, and understandeth not the judgment of thy God; yea, he showeth by this his behavior, that though he as God's ordinance serveth thee by afflicting thee, yet means he nothing less than to destroy thee: by the which also he prognosticates before thee that he is working out his own damnation by doing thee good. Lay therefore the woful state of such to heart, and render him that which is good for his evil, and love for his hatred to thee; then shalt thou show that thou art moved by a spirit of holiness, and art like thy heavenly Father. And be it so, that thy pity and prayers can do such a one no good, yet they must light somewhere, or return again, as ships come laden from the Indies, full of blessings into thine own bosom.

Poor man, thou hast thy time to be afflicted by thy enemies, that thy golden graces may shine the more; thou art in the fire and they blow the bellows. But wouldst thou change places with them? Wouldst thou sit upon

their place of ease? Dost thou desire to be with them? O rest thyself contented; in thy patience possess thy soul, and pity and bewail them in the condition in which they are.

The cup that God's people in all ages have drank of, even the cup of affliction and persecution, it is not in the hand of the enemy, but in the hand of God; and he, not they, poureth out of the same.

There are but two ways of obeying: the one to do that which I in my conscience do believe that I am bound to do, actively; and where I cannot obey actively, there I am willing to lie down and to suffer what they shall do unto me.

A Christian, when he sees trouble coming upon him, should not fly in the face of the instrument that brings, but in the face of the cause of its coming. Now the cause is thyself, thy base self, thy sinful self, and thy unworthy carriages towards God under all the mercy, patience, and long-suffering that God has bestowed upon thee, and exercised towards thee. Here thou mayest quarrel, and be revenged, and spare not, so thou take vengeance in a right way; and thou wilt do so, when thou takest it by godly sorrow. 1 Cor. 7:10, 11.

It is a rare thing to suffer aright, and to have thy spirit in suffering beat only against God's enemy, sin.

Let them that are God's sufferers pluck up a good heart; let them not be afraid to trust God with their souls, and with their eternal concerns. Let them cast all their care upon God, for he careth for them.

"But I am in the dark." I answer, never stick at that. It is most bravely done to trust God with the soul

in the dark, and to resolve to serve God for nothing, rather than give out. Not to see and yet to believe, and to be a follower of the Lamb and yet to be at uncertainty what we shall have at last, argues love, fear, faith, and an honest mind, and gives the greatest sign of one that hath true sincerity in his soul. It was this that made Job and Peter so famous; and the want of it took away much of the glory of the faith of Thomas. Wherefore, believe verily that God is ready, willing; yea, that he looks for and expects that thou, who art a sufferer, shouldst commit the keeping of thy soul to him as unto a faithful Creator.

Is there nothing in dark providences, for the sake of the sight and observation of which such a day may be rendered lovely, when it is upon us? Is there nothing of God, of his wisdom and power and goodness, to be seen in thunder and lightning, in hailstones, in storms and darkness and tempests? Why then is it said, he hath his way in the whirlwind and storm? And why have God's servants of old made such notes, and observed from them such excellent and wonderful things? There is that of God to be seen in such a day, which cannot be seen in another. His power in holding up some, his wrath in leaving others; his making shrubs to stand, and his suffering cedars to fall; his infatuating the counsels of men, and his making the devil to outwit himself; his giving his presence to his people, and his leaving his foes in the dark; his discovering the uprightness of the hearts of his sanctified ones, and laying open the hypocrisy of others, is a working of spiritual wonders in the day of his wrath and of the whirlwind and storm.

These days, these days of trial, are the days that do most aptly give an occasion to Christians to take the exactest measures and scantlings of ourselves. We are apt to overshoot in days that are calm, and to think ourselves far higher and more strong than we find we are when the

trying day is upon us. The mouth of Gaal, Judges 9 : 38, and the boasts of Peter, were great and high before the trial came; but when that came, they found themselves to fall far short of the courage they thought they had. We also, before the temptation comes, think we can walk upon the sea; but when the winds blow, we feel ourselves begin to sink. Hence such a time is rightly said to be a time to try us, or to find out what we are; and is there no good in this? Is it not this that rightly rectifies our judgment about ourselves, that makes us to know ourselves, that tends to cut off those superfluous sprigs of pride and self-conceitedness, wherewith we are subject to be overcome? Is not such a day the day that bends us, humbles us, and that makes us bow before God for our faults committed in our prosperity? And yet doth it yield no good unto us? We could not live without such turnings of the hand of God upon us.

Thine own doubts and mistrusts about what God will do and about whither thou shalt go, when thou for him hast suffered awhile he can resolve, yea, dissolve, crush, and bring to nothing. He can make fear flee far away, and place heavenly confidence in its room. He can bring invisible and eternal things to the eye of thy soul, and make thee see *that*, in those things in which thine enemies shall see nothing, that thou shalt count worth the loss of ten thousand lives to enjoy. He can pull such things out of his bosom, and can put such things into thy mouth; yea, can make thee choose to be gone, though through the flames, rather than to stay here and die in silken sheets. Yea, he can himself come near, and bring his heaven and glory to thee. The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon them that are but reproached for the name of Christ. And what the Spirit of glory is, and what is his resting upon his sufferers, is quite beyond the knowledge of the world, is but little felt by saints at peace. They that are

engaged, that are under the lash for Christ—they, I say, have it, and understand something of it.

Look not upon the sufferings of God's people for their religion, to be tokens of God's great anger. It is, to be sure, as our heavenly Father orders it, rather a token of his love; for suffering for the gospel and for the sincere profession of it, is indeed a dignity put upon us, a dignity that all men are not counted worthy of. Count it therefore a favor that God has bestowed upon thee his truth, and grace to enable thee to profess it, though thou be made to suffer for it.

Let God's people think never the worse of religion because of the coarse entertainment it meeteth with in the world. It is better to choose God and affliction, than the world, and sin, and carnal peace.

It is necessary that we should suffer, because we have sinned; and if God will have us suffer a little while here for his word, instead of suffering for our sins in hell, let us be content, and count it a mercy with thankfulness.

The wicked are reserved to the day of destruction, they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath. How kindly, therefore, doth God deal with us, when he chooses to afflict us but for a little, that with everlasting kindness he may have mercy upon us.

Since the rod is God's as well as the child, let us not look upon our troubles as if they came from and were managed only by hell. It is true, a persecutor has a black mark upon him; but yet the Scriptures say that all the ways of the persecutor are God's. Wherefore as we should, so again we should not, be afraid of men: we should be afraid of them, because they will hurt us; but we should not be afraid of them as if they were let loose to do to us and with us what they will. God's bridle is upon them, God's hook is in their nose; yea, and God hath determined

the bounds of their rage; and if he lets them drive his church into the sea of troubles, it shall be but up to the neck; and so far it may go and not be drowned. Isaiah 8:7, 8.

"May we not fly in a time of persecution? Your pressing upon us that persecution is ordered and managed by God, makes us afraid to fly."

Thou mayest do in this even as it is in thy heart. If it is in thy heart to fly, fly; if it be in thy heart to stand, stand. Any thing but a denial of the truth. He that flies, has warrant to do so; he that stands, has warrant to do so. Yea, the same man may both fly and stand, as the call and working of God with his heart may be. Moses fled. Moses stood: Jeremiah fled. Jeremiah stood; Christ withdrew himself, Christ stood; Paul fled. Paul stood.

But in flying, fly not from religion; fly not, for the sake of a trade; fly not, that thou mayest have care for the flesh: this is wicked, and will yield neither peace nor profit to thy soul, neither now, nor at death, nor at the day of judgment.

The hotter the rage and fury of men are against righteous ways, the more those that love righteousness grow therein. For they are concerned for it, not to hide it, but to make it spangle; not to extinguish it, but to greaten it, and to show the excellency of it in all its features and in all its comely proportion. Now such an one will make straight steps for his feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way. Heb. 12:13.

Now he shows to all men what faith is, by charity, by self-denial, by meekness, by gentleness, by long-suffering, by patience, by love to enemies, and by doing good to them that hate us. Now he walketh upon his high places, yea, will not now admit that so slovenly a conversation should come within his doors, as did use to haunt his house in

former times. Now it is Christ-mas, now it is suffering-time, now we must keep holy day every day.

The reason is, that a man when he suffereth for Christ is set upon a hill, upon a stage, as in a theatre, to play a part for God in the world. And you know, when men are to play their parts upon a stage, they count themselves if possible more bound to circumspection; and that for the credit of their master, the credit of their art, and the credit of themselves. For then the eyes of every body are fixed, they gape and stare upon them, Psalm 22 : 17, and a trip here is as bad as a fall in another place. Also now God himself looks on. Yea, he smileth, as being pleased to see a good behavior attending the trial of the innocent.

There are some of the graces of God that are in thee, that as to some of their acts cannot show themselves, nor their excellency, nor their power, nor what they can do, but as thou art in a suffering state. Faith and patience in persecution have that to do, that to show, and that to perform, that cannot be done, shown, nor performed, anywhere else but there. There is also a patience of hope, a rejoicing in hope when we are in tribulation, that is over and above that which we have when we are at ease and quiet. That also that all graces can endure and triumph over, shall not be known, but when and as we are in a state of affliction. Now these acts of our graces are of such worth and esteem with God, and he so much delighteth in them, that occasion, through his righteous judgment, must be ministered for them to show their beauty and what bravery there is in them.

It is also to be considered that those acts of our graces that cannot be put forth or show themselves in their splendor but when we christianly suffer, will yield such fruit to those whose trials call them into exercise, as will in the day of God abound to their comfort and tend to their perfection in glory. 1 Peter, 1 : 7; 2 Cor. 4 : 17.

Why then should we think that our innocent lives will exempt us from sufferings, or that troubles shall do us harm?

Alas, we have need of those bitter pills at which we so much wince. I see that I still have need of these trials; and if God will by these judge me, as he judges his saints, that I may not be condemned with the world, I will cry, Grace, grace, for ever.

Shall we deserve correction, and be angry because we have it? Or shall it come to save us, and shall we be offended with the hand that brings it? Our sickness is so great that our enemies take notice of it; let them know too that we take our purges patiently.

We are willing to pay for those potions that are given us for the health of our body, how sick soever they make us; and if God will have us pay too for that which is to better our souls, why should we grudge thereat? Those that bring us these medicines have little enough for their pains; for my part, I profess I would not for a great deal be bound, for their wages, to do their work. True, physicians are for the most part chargeable, and niggards are too loath to part with their money to them; but when necessity says they must either take physic or die, of two evils they desire to choose the least. Why, affliction is better than sin; and if God sends the one to cleanse us from the other, let us thank him, and be also content to pay the messenger.

BUNYAN'S TRIAL AND IMPRISONMENT.

FROM BUNYAN'S EXAMINATION BEFORE JUSTICES KEELING, CHESTER,* ETC.

KEELING. Justice Keeling said that I ought not to preach, and asked me where I had my authority; with many other such like words.

* On the restoration of the house of Stuart, Charles II. entered London, in May, 1660. In November of that year, Bunyan was indicted for an upholder of unlawful assemblies and conventicles, and for not conforming to the church of England. "He was sentenced,"

BUNYAN. I said that I would prove that it was lawful for me, and such as I am, to preach the word of God.

KEELING. He said unto me, By what scripture?

BUNYAN. I said, by that in the first epistle of Peter, fourth chapter and eleventh verse, and Acts eighteenth, with other scriptures; which he would not suffer me to mention, but said, Hold, not so many: which is the first?

BUNYAN. I said, This: "As every man hath received the gift, even so let him minister the same unto another, as good stewards of the grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."

KEELING. He said, Let me a little open that scripture to you. As every man hath received the gift; that is, said he, as every man hath received a trade, so let him follow

says Crosby, "to perpetual banishment, in pursuance of an act made by the then parliament." This sentence was never executed, but he was kept in prison for more than twelve years.

Subsequently to this year, 1660, several oppressive acts were passed, as the Corporation act, 1661, the act of Uniformity, 1662, the Five-mile act, 1665, the Conventicle acts, 1666 and 1671, and the Test act, 1673. The act of Uniformity required that every clergyman should be reordained; should declare his assent to every thing contained in the Book of Common Prayer, etc. By this act, about two thousand dissenting ministers were ejected from their livings, and the most cruel persecution followed. The Five-mile and Conventicle acts imposed various fines, imprisonment, and death upon all persons above sixteen years of age, who attended divine service where the liturgy was not read; ordained that no non-conformist minister should live within five miles of any town; and aimed to suppress all meetings for worship among the non-conformists. These in a short time made frightful desolations, and all the jails in the kingdom soon became filled with men who were the brightest ornaments of Christianity. The persecuted included both sexes and all ages, from the child of nine or ten years, to the hoary-headed saint of eighty. In Picart's Religious Ceremonies, it is stated that the number of dissenters of all sects, who perished in prison under Charles II., was EIGHT THOUSAND. On the accession of William III., these penalties and disabilities were removed by the Toleration act. The Corporation and Test acts, however, disgraced the statute-book of England till the year 1828, when they were triumphantly repealed. Offor's Introduction, Hume's History, and Ency. Amer.

it. If any man hath received a gift of tinkering, as thou hast done, let him follow his tinkering; and so other men their trades, and the divine his calling, etc.

BUNYAN. Nay, sir, said I, but it is most clear that the apostle speaks here of preaching the word: if you do but compare both the verses together, the next verse explains this gift what it is; saying, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God;" so that it is plain that the Holy Ghost doth not so much in this place exhort to civil callings, as to the exercising of those gifts that we have received from God. I would have gone on, but he would not give me leave.

KEELING. He said we might do it in our families, but not otherwise.

BUNYAN. I said, if it was lawful to do good to some, it was lawful to do good to more. If it was a good duty to exhort our families, it is good to exhort others; but if they held it a sin to meet together to seek the face of God, and exhort one another to follow Christ, I should sin still; for so we should do.

KEELING. He said he was not so well versed in scripture as to dispute, or words to that purpose. And said, moreover, that they could not wait upon me any longer; but said to me, Then you confess the indictment; do you not? Now, and not till now, I saw I was indicted.

BUNYAN. I said, This I confess: we have had many meetings together both to pray to God and to exhort one another, and we have had the sweet comforting presence of the Lord among us for encouragement; blessed be his name therefor. I confessed myself guilty no otherwise.

KEELING. Then said he, Hear your judgment. You must be had back again to prison, and there lie for three months following; and at three months' end, if you do not submit to go to church to hear divine service, and leave your preaching, you must be banished the realm: and if, after such a day as shall be appointed you to be gone, you shall

be found in this realm, or be found to come over again without special license from the king, you must stretch by the neck for it; I tell you plainly. And so he bid my jailer have me away.

BUNYAN. I told him, as to this matter I was at a point with him; for if I was out of prison to-day, I would preach the gospel again to-morrow, by the help of God.

I continued in prison till the next assizes, which are called midsummer assizes, being then kept in August, 1661.

Now at that assizes, because I would not leave any possible means unattempted that might be lawful, I did, by my wife,* present a petition to the judges three times, that I might be heard, and that they would impartially take my case into consideration.

The first time my wife went, she presented it to Judge Hale, who very mildly received it at her hand, telling her that he would do her and me the best good he could; but he feared, he said, he could do none. The next day again, lest they should through the multitude of business forget me, we did throw another petition into the coach to Judge Twisdon, who, when he had seen it; snapt her up, and angrily told her I was a convicted person, and could not be released unless I would promise to preach no more, etc.

Well, after this, she again presented another to Judge Hale, as he sat on the bench, who, as it seemed, was willing to give her audience; only Justice Chester being pres-

* "This courageous woman [his second wife] and lord chief-justice Hale and Bunyan have long since met in heaven; but how little could they recognize each other's character on earth! How little could the distressed, insulted wife have imagined, that beneath the judge's ermine there was beating the heart of a child of God, a man of humility, integrity, and prayer! How little could the great, learned, illustrious, and truly pious judge have dreamed that the man, the obscure tinker whom he was suffering to languish in prison for want of a writ of error, would one day be the subject of greater admiration and praise than all the judges in the kingdom of Great Britain." Dr. Cheever's Lectures on Pilgrim's Progress, p 158.

ent, stept up and said that I was convicted in the court, and that I was a hot-spirited fellow, or words to that purpose; whereat he waived it, and did not meddle with it. But yet, my wife being encouraged by the high-sheriff, did venture once more into their presence, as the poor widow did to the unjust judge, to try what she could do with them for my liberty before they went forth of the town. The place where she went to them was to the Swan Chamber, where the two judges and many justices and gentry of the country were in company together. She then, coming into the chamber with abashed face and a trembling heart, began her errand to them in this manner.

Woman. My lord—directing herself to Judge Hale—I make bold to come once again to your lordship to know what may be done with my husband.

Judge Hale. To whom he said, Woman, I told thee before I could do thee no good, because they have taken that for a conviction which thy husband spoke at the sessions; and unless there be something done to undo that, I can do thee no good.

Woman. My lord, said she, he is kept unlawfully in prison; they clapped him up before there was any proclamation against the meetings; the indictment also is false; besides, they never asked him whether he was guilty or no; neither did he confess the indictment.

One of the Justices. Then one of the Justices that stood by, whom she knew not, said, My lord, he was lawfully convicted.

Woman. It is false, said she; for when they said to him, Do you confess the indictment? he said only this, that he had been at several meetings, both where there was preaching the word and prayer, and that they had God's presence among them.

Judge Twisdon. Whereat Judge Twisdon answered very angrily, saying, What, you think we can do as we list! Your husband is a breaker of the peace, and is con-

victed by the law, etc. Whereupon Judge Hale called for the statute-book.

Woman. But, said she, my lord, he was not lawfully convicted.

Chester. Then Justice Chester said, My lord, he was lawfully convicted.

Woman. It is false, said she; it was but a word of discourse that they took for conviction.

Chester. But it is recorded, woman, it is recorded, said Justice Chester; as if it must of necessity be true, because it was recorded. With which words he often endeavored to stop her mouth, having no other argument to convince her but, It is recorded, it is recorded.

Woman. My lord, said she, I was a while since at London, to see if I could get my husband's liberty; and there I spoke with my Lord Burkwood, one of the House of Lords, to whom I delivered a petition, who took it of me and presented it to some of the rest of the House of Lords for my husband's releasement; who, when they had seen it, said that they could not release him, but had committed his releasement to the judges at the next assizes. This he told me; and now I come to you to see if any thing can be done in this business, and you give neither releasement nor relief. To which they gave her no answer, but made as if they heard her not.

Chester. Only Justice Chester was often up with this, He is convicted, and it is recorded.

Woman. If it be, it is false, said she.

Chester. My lord, said Justice Chester, he is a pestilent fellow; there is not such a fellow in the country again.

Twisdon. What, will your husband leave preaching? If he will do so, then send for him.

Woman. My lord, said she, he dares not leave preaching as long as he can speak.

Twisdon. See here: what should we talk any more

about such a fellow? Must he do what he lists? He is a breaker of the peace.

Woman. She told him again, that he desired to live peaceably and to follow his calling, that his family might be maintained; and moreover said, My lord, I have four small children that cannot help themselves, of which one is blind; and we have nothing to live upon but the charity of good people.

Hale. Whereat Justice Hale, looking very soberly on the matter, said, Alas, poor woman!

Twisdon. But Judge Twisdon told her that she made poverty her cloak; and said, moreover, that he understood I was maintained better by running up and down a preaching, than by following my calling.

Hale. What is his calling? said Judge Hale.

Answer. Then some of the company that stood by said, A tinker, my lord.

Woman. Yes, said she, and because he is a tinker and a poor man, therefore he is despised and cannot have justice.

Hale. Then Judge Hale answered, very mildly, saying, I tell thee, woman, seeing it is so that they have taken what thy husband spake for a conviction, thou must apply thyself to the king, or sue out his pardon, or get out a writ of error.

Chester. But when Justice Chester heard him give her this counsel, and especially, as she supposed, because he spoke of a writ of error, he chafed and seemed to be very much offended, saying, My lord, he will preach and do what he lists.

Woman. He preacheth nothing but the word of God, said she.

Twisdon. He preach the word of God! said Twisdon—and withal she thought he would have struck her—he runneth up and down and doeth harm.

Woman. No, my lord, said she, it is not so; God hath owned him, and done much good by him.

Twisdon. God! said he; his doctrine is the doctrine of the devil.

Woman. My lord, said she, when the righteous Judge shall appear, it will be known that his doctrine is not the doctrine of the devil.

Twisdon. My lord, said he to Judge Hale, do not mind her, but send her away.

Hale. Then said Judge Hale, I am sorry, woman, that I can do thee no good: thou must do one of those three things aforesaid, namely, either to apply thyself to the king, or sue out his pardon, or get a writ of error; but a writ of error will be cheapest.

Woman. At which Chester again seemed to be in a chafe, and put off his hat, and as she thought scratched his head for anger; but when I saw, said she, that there was no prevailing to have my husband sent for, though I often desired them that they would send for him, that he might speak for himself, telling them that he could give them better satisfaction than I could in what they demanded of him, with several other things which now I forget: only this I remember, that though I was somewhat timorous at my first entrance into the chamber, yet before I went out I could not but break forth into tears, not so much because they were so hard-hearted against me and my husband, but to think what a sad account such poor creatures will have to give at the coming of the Lord, when they shall there answer for all things whatsoever they have done in the body, whether it be good or whether it be bad. So when I departed from them, the book of statutes was brought; but what they said of it I know nothing at all, neither did I hear any more from them.

MARTYRS.

In the house of the forest of Lebanon you find pillars, pillars; so in the church in the wilderness. Oh the mighty ones of which the church was compacted; they were all

pillars, strong, bearing up the house against wind and weather; nothing but fire and sword could dissolve them. As therefore this house was made up of great timber, so this church in the wilderness was made up of giants in grace. These men had the faces of lions; no prince, no king, no threat, no terror, no torment could make them yield. They loved not their lives unto the death. They have laughed their enemies in the face, they have triumphed in the flames. None ever showed higher saints than were they in the church in the wilderness. Others talked, these have suffered; others have said, these have done; these have voluntarily taken their lives in their hands, for they loved them not to the death, and have fairly and in cool blood laid them down before the world, God, angels, and men, for the confirming of the truth which they have professed.

That which makes a martyr, is suffering for the word of God after a right manner. And that is when he suffereth not only for righteousness, but for righteousness' sake; not only for truth, but of love to truth; not only for God's word, but according to it, to wit, in that holy, humble, meek manner that the word of God requireth. A man may give his body to be burned for God's truth, and yet be none of God's martyrs. 1 Cor. 13 : 1–3.

CHRISTIAN COURAGE.

When we see our brethren before us fall to the earth by death, through the violence of the enemies of God, for their holy and Christian profession, we should covet to make good their ground against them, though our turn should be next. We should valiantly do in this matter as is the custom of soldiers in war; take great care that the ground be maintained, and the front kept full and complete.

There are but few when they come to the cross, cry,

Welcome, cross! as some of the martyrs did to the stake they were burned at. Therefore, if you meet with the cross in thy journey, in what manner soever it be, be not daunted and say, Alas, what shall I do now? but rather take courage, knowing that by the cross is the way to the kingdom. Can a man believe in Christ, and not be hated by the devil? Can he make a profession of Christ, and that sweetly and convincingly, and the children of Satan hold their tongue? Can darkness agree with light?

THE CHRISTIAN WARFARE.

Departing from iniquity is not a work of an hour, or a day, or a week, or a month, or a year; but it is a work that will last thee thy lifetime, and there is the greatness and difficulty of it. Were it to be done presently, or were the work to be quickly over, how many are there that would be found to have departed from iniquity; but for that it is a work of continuance, and not worth any thing unless men hold out to the end; therefore it is that so few are found actors or overcomers therein. Departing from iniquity, with many, is but like the falling out of two neighbors; they hate one another for a while, and then renew their old friendship again.

But again, since to depart from iniquity is a work of time, of all thy time, no wonder if it dogs thee, and offereth to return upon thee again and again; for sin is mischievous, and seeks nothing less than thy ruin. Wherefore, thou must in the first place take it for granted that thus it will be, and so cry the harder to God for the continuing of his presence and grace upon thee in this blessed work, that as thou hast begun to depart from iniquity, so thou mayest have strength to do it to the last gasp of thy life.

And further, for that departing from iniquity is a kind of warfare with it—for iniquity will hang in thy flesh what it can, and will not be easily kept under—therefore no mar-

vel if thou find it wearisome work, and that the thing that thou wouldst get rid of is so unwilling to let thee depart from it.

And since the work is so weighty, and makes thee to go groaning on, I will for thy help give thee here a few things to consider of: And,

1. Remember that God sees thee, and has his eyes open upon thee, even then when sin and temptation are flying at thee to give them some entertainment. This was the thought that made Joseph depart from sin, when solicited to embrace it by a very powerful argument. Genesis 39 : 6, 7.

2. Remember that God's wrath burns against it, and that he will surely be revenged on it, and on all that give it entertainment. This made Job afraid to countenance it, and put him upon departing from it: "For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure." Job 31 : 23.

3. Remember the mischiefs that it has done to those that have embraced it, and what distress it has brought upon others. This made the whole congregation of Israel tremble to think that any of their brethren should give countenance to it. Joshua 22 : 16–18.

4. Remember what Christ hath suffered by it, that he might deliver us from the power of it. This made Paul so heartily depart from it, and wish all Christians to do so as well as he. 2 Cor. 5 : 14.

5. Remember that those that are now in hell-fire went thither for that they loved iniquity, and would not depart from it. Psalm 9 : 17 ; 11 : 6.

6. Remember that a profession is not worth a pin, if they that make it do not depart from iniquity. James 2 : 16, 17.

7. Remember that thy death-bed will be very uneasy to thee, if thy conscience at that day shall be clogged with the guilt of thy iniquity. Hos. 7 : 13, 14.

8. Remember that at the judgment-day Christ will say, Depart from me, to those that have not here departed from their sin and iniquity. Luke 13 : 27; Matt. 25 : 41.

Lastly, Remember well, and think much upon what a blessed reward the Son of God will give to them at that day, that have joined to their profession of faith in him a holy and blessed conversation.

He that will depart from iniquity must be well fortified with faith and patience and the love of God; for iniquity has its beauty-spots and its advantages attending on it; hence it is compared to a woman, Zech. 5 : 7, for it allureth greatly. Therefore I say, he that will depart therefrom had need have faith; that being it which will help him to see beyond it, and that will show him more in things that are invisible, than can be found in sin, were it ten thousand times more entangling than it is. 2 Cor. 4 : 18. He has need of patience also to hold out in this work of departing from iniquity. For indeed, to depart from that is to draw my mind off from that which will follow me with continual solicitations. Samson withstood his Delilah for a while, but she got the mastery of him at the last. Why so? because he wanted patience; he grew angry and was vexed, and could withstand her solicitations no longer. Judges 16 : 15–17. Many there be, also, that can well enough be contented to shut sin out of doors for a while; but because sin has much fair speech, therefore it overcomes at last. Prov. 7 : 21. For sin and iniquity will not be easily said nay. Wherefore, departing from iniquity is a work of length, as long as life shall last. A work, did I say? It is a war, a continual combat; wherefore, he that will adventure to set upon this work, must needs be armed with faith and patience, a daily exercise he will find himself put to by the continual attempts of iniquity to be putting forth itself. Matt. 24 : 13; Rev. 3 : 10.

THE CHRISTIAN ARMOR.

The war that the church makes with antichrist is rather defensive than offensive. A Christian also, if he can but defend his soul in the sincere profession of the true religion, doth what by duty, as to this, he is bound. Wherefore, though the New Testament admits him to put on the whole armor of God, yet the whole and every part thereof is spiritual, and only defensive. True, there is mention made of the sword, but that sword is the word of God—a weapon that hurteth none, none at all but the devil and sin, and those that love it. Indeed, it was made for Christians to defend themselves and their religion with, against hell and the angels of darkness.

OBJECTION. But he that shall use none other than this, must look to come off a loser.

ANSWER. In the judgment of the world this is true, but not in the judgment of them that have skill and a heart to use it. For this armor is not Saul's which David refused, but God's; by which the lives of all those have been secured, that put it on and handled it well. You read of some of David's mighty men of valor, that their faces were as the faces of lions, and that they were as swift of foot as the roes upon the mountains. Why, God's armor makes a man's face look thus; also it makes him that useth it more lively and active than before. God's armor is no burden to the body, nor clog to the mind, but rather a natural, instead of an artificial fortification.

But this armor comes not to any, but out of the King's hand. Christ distributeth his armor to his church. Hence it is said, "It is given to us to suffer for him." It is given to us by himself, and on his behalf.

I saw also, that the Interpreter took him again by the hand and led him into a pleasant place, where was builded a stately palace beautiful to behold; at the sight of which Christian was greatly delighted: he saw also upon

the top thereof certain persons walking, who were clothed all in gold.

Then said Christian, "May we go in thither?"

Then the Interpreter took him, and led him up towards the door of the palace; and behold, at the door stood a great company of men, as desirous to go in, but durst not. There also sat a man at a little distance from the door, at a table-side, with a book and his ink-horn before him, to take the name of him that should enter therein; he saw also, that in the doorway stood many men in armor to keep it, being resolved to do to the men that would enter what hurt and mischief they could.

Now was Christian somewhat in a maze; at last, when every man started back for fear of the armed men, Christian saw a man of a very stout countenance come up to the man that sat there to write, saying, "Set down my name, sir;" the which when he had done, he saw the man draw his sword, and put a helmet upon his head, and rush towards the door upon the armed men, who laid upon him with deadly force; but the man was not at all discouraged, but fell to cutting and hacking most fiercely. So after he had received and given many wounds to those that attempted to keep him out, he cut his way through them all, and pressed forward into the palace; at which there was a pleasant voice heard from those that were within, even of those that walked upon the top of the palace, saying,

"Come in, come in;
Eternal glory thou shalt win."

So he went in, and was clothed with such garments as they Then Christian smiled and said, "I think verily I know the meaning of this."

In the description of the Christian armor, we have no provision for the back.

XV. TEMPTATIONS.

TEMPTATIONS OF SATAN.

Satan, even from himself, besides the working of our own lust, doth do us wonderful injury, and hits our souls with many a fiery dart, that we think comes either from ourselves or from heaven and God himself.

Satan diligently waiteth to come in at the door, if Careless has left it a little ajar.

There is nothing that Satan more desires than to get good men in his sieve to sift them as wheat, that if possible he may leave them nothing but bran; no grace, but the very husk and shell of religion.

So long as we retain the simplicity of the word, we have Satan at the end of the staff; for unless we give way to a doubt about that, about the truth and simplicity of it, he gets no ground upon us. In time of temptation, it is our wisdom and duty to keep close to the word that prohibits and forbids the sin; and not to reason with Satan, of how far our outward and worldly privileges go, especially of those privileges that border upon the temptation, as Eve here did: "We may eat of all but one." By this she goeth to the outside of her liberty, and sees herself upon the brink of the danger. Christ might have told the tempter, when he assaulted him, that he could have made stones bread, and that he could have descended from the pinnacle of the temple, as afterwards he did; but that would have admitted of other questions; wherefore he chooseth to lay aside such needless and unwarrantable reasonings, and resisteth him with a direct word of God, most pertinent to quash the tempter and also to preserve himself in the way.

To go to the outside of privileges, especially when tempted of the devil, is often if not always very dangerous and hazardous.

As long as the devil is alive there is danger; and though a strong Christian may be too hard for, and may overcome him in one thing, he may be too hard for, yea, and may overcome the Christian two for one afterwards. Thus he served David, and thus he served Peter, and thus he in our day has served many more. The strongest are weak, the wisest are fools, when suffered to be sifted as wheat in Satan's sieve; yea, and have often been so proved, to the wounding of their great hearts and the dishonor of religion.

It is usual with the devil in his temptings of poor creatures, to put a good and bad together, that by show of the good the tempted might be drawn to do that which in truth is evil. Thus he served Saul; he spared the best of the herd and flock, under pretence of sacrificing to God, and so transgressed the plain command. But this the apostle said was dangerous, and therefore censureth such as in a state of condemnation. Thus he served Adam; he put the desirableness of sight and a plain transgression of God's law together, that by the loveliness of the one they might the easier be brought to do the other. O, poor Eve, do we wonder at thy folly? Doubtless we had done as bad with half the argument of thy temptation.

Satan by tempting one may chiefly intend the destruction of another. By tempting the wife, he may aim at the destruction of the husband; by tempting the father, he may design the destruction of his children; and by tempting the king, he may design the ruin of his subjects, even as in the case of David: "Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number the people." He had a mind to

destroy seventy thousand, therefore he tempted David to sin.

I have sent you here enclosed a drop of that honey that I have taken out of the carcass of a lion. I have eaten thereof myself, and am much refreshed thereby. Temptations, when we meet them at first, are as the lion that roared upon Samson; but if we overcome them, the next time we see them we shall find a nest of honey within them.

TEMPTATIONS OF THE WORLD.

If thou wouldst be faithful to do that work that God hath appointed thee to do in this world for his name, then labor always to possess thy heart with a right understanding, both of the things that this world yieldeth, and of the things that shall be hereafter. I am confident that most if not all the miscarriages of the saints and people of God have their rise from deceivable thoughts here. The things of this world appear to us more, and those that are to come less, than they are; and hence it is that many are so hot and eager for things that be in the world, and so cold and heartless for those that be in heaven. Satan is here a mighty artist, and can show us all earthly things in a multiplying-glass; but when we look up to things above, we see them as through sackcloth of hair. But take thou heed; be not ruled by thy sensual appetite that can only savor fleshly things, neither be thou ruled by carnal reason which always darkeneth the things of heaven; but go to the word, and as that says, so judge thou. That tells thee all things under the sun are vanity, nay, worse, vexation of spirit; that tells thee the world is not, even when it doth most appear to be: wilt thou set thine heart upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings, and fly away as an eagle towards heaven. The same may be said for honors, pleasures, and the like; they are poor, low, base things to be entertained by a Chris-

tian's heart. The man that hath most of them may in the fulness of his sufficiency be in straits; yea, when he is about to fill his belly with them, God may cast the fury of his wrath upon him; so is every one that layeth up treasure for himself on earth, and is not rich towards God. A horse that is laden with gold and pearls all day, may have a foul stable and a galled back at night. And "woe to him that increaseth that which is not his, and that ladeth himself with thick clay." O man of God, throw this bone to the dogs; suck not at it, there is no marrow there. "Set thy affections on things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Colos. 3 : 1–4.

ENCOURAGEMENTS FOR THE TEMPTED.

Let us cast ourselves upon this love of Christ. No greater encouragement can be given us, than what is in the text, Eph. 3 : 18, 19, and about it. It is great; it is "love that passeth knowledge." Men that are sensible of danger, are glad when they hear of such helps upon which they may boldly venture for escape. Why, such a help and relief the text helpeth trembling and fearful consciences to. Fear and trembling as to misery hereafter, can flow but from what we know, feel, or imagine; but the text speaks of a love that passeth knowledge, consequently of a love that goes beyond all these. Besides, the apostle's conclusion upon this subject plainly makes it manifest, that this meaning which I have put upon the text is the mind of the Holy Ghost. Now "unto him," saith he, "that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." What can be more plain? What can be more full? What can be more suitable to the most desponding spirit in any man? He can do more than thou knowest he will. He can do more than thou thinkest he can. What dost thou think?

Why, I think, saith the sinner, that I am cast away. Well, but there are worse thoughts than these; therefore think again. Why, saith the sinner, I think that my sins are as many as all the sins in the world. Indeed this is a very black thought, but there are worse thoughts than this; therefore prithee think again. Why, I think, saith the sinner, that God is not able to pardon all my sins. Aye, now thou hast thought indeed; for this thought makes thee look more like a devil than a man; and yet, because thou art a man and not a devil, see the condescension and boundlessness of the love of thy God. He is able to do above all that we think. Couldst thou, sinner, if thou hadst been allowed, thyself express what thou wouldst have expressed—the greatness of the love thou wantest—with words that could have suited thee better? For it is not said he can do above what we think, meaning our thinking at present, but above all we can think; meaning, above the worst and most soul-dejecting thoughts that we have at any time. Sometimes the dejected have worse thoughts than they have at other times. Well, take them at their worst times, at times when they think, and think, till they think themselves down into the very pangs of hell, yet this word of the grace of God is above them, and shows that he can yet recover and save these miserable people.

And now I am upon this subject, I will a little further walk and travel with these desponding ones, and will put a few words in their mouths for their help against temptations that may come upon them hereafter. For as Satan follows such now with charges and applications of guilt, so he may follow them with interrogatories and appeals; for he can tell how by appeals, as well as by charging of sin, to sink and drown the sinner whose soul he has leave to engage. Suppose, therefore, that some distressed man or woman should after this way be engaged, and Satan should with his interrogatories and appeals be busy with them, to drive them to desperation; the text last mentioned, Eph.

3:18, 19, to say nothing of the subject of our discourse, yields plenty of help for the relief of such a one. Says Satan, Dost thou not know that thou hast horribly sinned? Yes, says the soul, I do. Says Satan, Dost thou not know that thou art one of the vilest in all the pack of professors? Yes, says the soul, I do. Says Satan, Doth not thy conscience tell thee that thou art and hast been more base than any of thy fellows can imagine thee to be? Yes, says the soul, my conscience tells me so. Well, saith Satan, now will I come upon thee with my appeals. Art thou not a graceless wretch? Yes. Hast thou a heart to be sorry for this wickedness? No, not as I should. And albeit, saith Satan, thou prayest sometimes, yet is not thy heart possessed with a belief that God will not regard thee? Yes, says the sinner. Why then, despair, and go hang thyself, saith the devil. And now we are at the end of the thing designed and driven at by Satan. And what shall I now do, saith the sinner? I answer, take up the words of the text against him: Christ loves with a love that "passeth knowledge." And answer him further, saying, Satan, though I cannot think that God loves me, though I cannot think that God will save me, yet I will not yield to thee; for God can do more than I think he can. And whereas thou appealedst unto me, if whether, when I pray, my heart is not possessed with the belief that God will not regard me, that shall not sink me neither; for God can "do abundantly above what I ask or think." Thus this text helpeth where obstructions are put in against our believing, and thereby casting ourselves upon the love of God in Christ for salvation.

And yet this is not all; for the text is yet more full: "He is able to do abundantly more, yea, exceeding abundantly more, or above all that we ask or think." It is a text made up of words picked and packed together by the wisdom of God; picked and packed together on purpose for the succor and relief of the tempted; that they may,

when in the midst of their distresses, cast themselves upon the Lord their God. He can do abundantly more than we ask. O, says the soul, that he would but do so much for me as I could ask him to do: how happy a man should I then be. Why, what wouldst thou ask for, sinner? You may be sure, says the soul, I would ask to be saved from my sins. I would ask for faith in, and love to, Christ; I would ask to be preserved in this evil world, and ask to be glorified with Christ in heaven. He that asketh for all this, doth indeed ask for much, and for more than Satan would have him believe that God is able or willing to bestow upon him. But mark: the text doth not say that God is able to do all that we can ask or think, but that he is able to do above all, yea, abundantly above all, yea, exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. What a text is this! What a God have we! God foresaw the sins of his people, and what work the devil would make with their hearts about them; and therefore, to prevent their ruin by his temptation, he has thus largely, as you see, expressed his love by his word. Let us therefore, as he has bidden us, make this good use of this doctrine of grace, to cast ourselves upon this love of God in the times of distress and temptation.

The bird in the air knows not the notes of the bird in the snare, until she comes thither herself.

When I have been laden with sin, and pestered with several temptations, and in a very sad manner, then have I had the trial of the virtue of Christ's blood, with trial of the virtue of other things; and I have found that when tears would not do, prayers would not do, repentings and all other things could not reach my heart, O then one touch, one drop, one shining of the virtue of THE BLOOD, of that blood that was let out with a spear, it hath in such a blessed manner delivered me, that it hath made me to

marvel. O, methinks it hath come with such life, such power, with such irresistible and marvellous glory, that it wipes off all the slurs, silences all the outcries, and quenches all the fiery darts and all the flames of hell-fire, that are begotten by the charges of the law, Satan, and doubtful remembrances of my sinful life.

There are three things that do usually afflict the soul that is earnestly looking after Jesus Christ.

1. Dreadful accusations from Satan. 2. Grievous, defiling, and infectious thoughts. 3. A strange readiness in our nature to fall in with both. By the first of these, the heart is made continually to tremble. Hence his temptations are compared to the roaring of a lion. For as the lion by roaring killeth the heart of his prey, so doth Satan kill the spirit of those that hearken to him; for when he tempteth, especially by way of accusation, he doth to us as Rabshakeh did to the Jews; he speaks to us in our own language. He speaks our sin at every word; our guilty conscience knows it. He speaks our death at every word; our doubting conscience feels it.

2. Besides this, there do now arise even in the heart such defiling and soul-infectious thoughts, as put the tempted to his wit's end For now it seems to the soul that the very flood-gates of the flesh are opened, and that to sin there is no stop at all; now the air seems to be covered with darkness, and the man is as if he was changed into the nature of a devil. Now, if ignorance and unbelief prevail, he concludeth that he is a reprobate, made to be taken and destroyed.

3. Now also he feeleth in him a readiness to fall in with every temptation—a readiness, I say, continually present. Romans 7 : 21. This throws all down. Now despair begins to swallow him up; now he can neither pray, nor read, nor hear, nor meditate on God, but fire and smoke continually burst forth of the heart against him; now sin

and great confusion puts forth itself in all. Yea, and the more the sinner desireth to do a duty sincerely, the further off he always finds himself; for by how much the soul struggleth under these distresses, by so much the more doth Satan put forth himself to resist, still infusing more poison, that if possible it might never struggle more, for strugglings are also as poison to Satan.

The fly in the spider's web is an emblem of the soul in such a condition: the fly is entangled in the web; at this the spider shows himself; if the fly stirs again, down comes the spider to her, and claps a foot upon her; if yet the fly makes a noise, then with poisoned mouth the spider lays hold upon her; if the fly struggles still, then he poisons her more and more: what shall the fly do now? Why, she dies, if somebody does not quickly release her. This is the case of the tempted; they are entangled in the web, their feet and wings are entangled; now Satan shows himself; if the soul now struggleth, Satan laboreth to hold it down; if it now shall make a noise, then he bites with blasphemous mouth, more poisonous than the gall of a serpent. If it struggle again, then he poisoneth more and more; insomuch that it must needs at last die in the net, if the man, the Lord Jesus, helps not out. The afflicted conscience understands my words.

Further, though the fly in the web is altogether incapable of looking for relief, yet this awakened, tempted Christian, is not. What must he do, therefore? How should he entertain hopes of life? If he looks to his heart, there is blasphemy; if he looks to his duties, there is sin; if he strives to mourn and lament, perhaps he cannot; unbelief and hardness hinder. Shall this man lie down and despair? No. Shall he trust to his duties? No. Shall he stay from Christ till his heart is better? No. What then? Let him now look to Jesus Christ crucified; then shall he see his sins answered for, then shall he see death dying, then shall he see guilt borne by another, and then shall he see

the devil overcome. This sight destroys the power of the first temptation, purifies the heart, and inclines the mind to all good things.

Didst thou never learn to outshoot the devil with his own bow, and to cut off his head with his own sword, as David served Goliath, who was a type of Satan?

Question. O how should a poor soul do this? This is rare indeed.

Answer. Why, truly thus: Doth Satan tell thee thou prayest but faintly, and with very cold devotion? answer him thus, and say, I am glad you told me, for this will make me trust the more to Christ's prayers, and the less to my own; also I will endeavor henceforward to groan, to sigh, and to be so fervent in my crying at the throne of grace, that I will, if I can, make the heavens rattle again with the mighty groans thereof. And whereas thou sayest that I am so weak in believing, I am glad you remind me of it; I hope it will henceforward stir me up to cry the more heartily to God for strong faith, make me the more restless till I have it. And seeing thou tellest me that I run so softly, and that I shall go near to miss of glory, this also shall be through grace to my advantage, and cause me to press the more earnestly towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. And seeing thou dost tell me that my sins are wondrous great, hereby thou bringest the remembrance of the unsupportable vengeance of God into my mind if I die out of Jesus Christ, and also the necessity of the blood, death, and merits of Christ to help me; I hope it will make me fly the faster and press the harder after an interest in him. And so all along, if he tell thee of thy deadness, dulness, coldness, or unbelief, or the greatness of thy sins, answer him and say, I am glad you told me; I hope it will be a means to make me run faster, seek more earnestly, and be the more restless after Jesus Christ. If thou didst but get this art, so as to

outrun him in his own shoes, as I may say, and to make his own darts to pierce himself, then thou mightest also say, Now do Satan's temptations, as well as all other things, work together for my good.

Objection. But I find so many weaknesses in every duty that I perform, as when I pray, when I read, when I hear or attempt any other duty, that it maketh me out of conceit with myself; it maketh me think that my duties are nothing worth.

Answer. Thou by this means art taken off from leaning on any thing below Jesus for eternal life. It is likely, if thou wast not sensible of many by-thoughts and wickednesses in thy best performances, thou wouldst go near to be some proud, abominable hypocrite, or a silly, proud, dissembling wretch at the best; such a one as wouldst send thy soul to the devil in a bundle of thy own righteousness.

Would Jesus Christ have mercy offered, in the first place, to the biggest sinner? Let the tempted harp upon this string for their help and consolation. The tempted, wherever he dwells, always thinks himself the biggest sinner, one most unworthy of eternal life.

This is Satan's master-argument: Thou art a horrible sinner, a hypocrite, one that has a profane heart, and one that is an utter stranger to a work of grace. I say, this is his maul, his club, his masterpiece; he does with this, as some do by their most enchanting songs, singing them everywhere. I believe there are but few saints in the world that have not had this temptation sounding in their ears. But were they but aware, Satan by all this does but drive them to the gap out at which they should go, and so escape his roaring.

Saith he, Thou art a great sinner, a horrible sinner, a profane-hearted wretch, one that cannot be matched for a vile one in the country.

And all this while Christ says to his ministers, Offer

mercy in the first place to the biggest sinners. So that this temptation drives thee directly into the arms of Jesus Christ.

Was therefore the tempted but aware, he might say, Aye, Satan, so I am, I am a sinner of the biggest size, and therefore have most need of Jesus Christ; yea, because I am such a wretch, therefore Jesus Christ calls me; yea, he calls me first—the first proffer of the gospel is to be made to the Jerusalem sinner. I am he; wherefore stand back, Satan, make way for me, my right is first to come to Jesus Christ.

This now will be like for like. This would foil the devil. This would make him say, I must not deal with this man thus; for then I put a sword into his hand to cut off my head.

Well, sinner, thou now speakest like a Christian; but say thus in a strong spirit in the hour of temptation, and then thou wilt, to thy commendation and comfort, quit thyself well.

This improving of Christ in dark hours is the life, though the hardest part of our Christianity. We should neither stop at darkness, nor at the raging of our lusts, but go on in a way of venturing and casting the whole of our concerns for the next world at the foot of Jesus Christ. This is the way to make the darkness light, and also to allay the raging of our corruption.

What a brave encouragement is it for one that is come for grace to the throne of grace, to see so great a number already there on their seats, in their robes, with their palms in their hands and their crowns upon their heads, singing of salvation to God and the Lamb!

And I say again—and speak now to the dejected—methinks it would be strange, O thou that art so afraid that the greatness of thy sins will be a bar unto thee, if amongst all this great number of pipers and harpers that are got to

glory, thou canst not espy one that, when here, was as vile a sinner as thyself. Look, man; they are there for thee to view them, and for thee to take encouragement to hope, when thou shalt consider what grace and mercy have done for them. Look again, I say, now thou art upon thy knees, and see if some that are among them have not done worse than thou hast done. And yet behold, they are set down; and yet behold, they have crowns on their heads, their harps in their hands, and sing aloud of salvation to their God and the Lamb. Behold, tempted soul; dost thou not yet see what a throne of grace here is, and what multitudes are already arrived thither, to give thanks unto His name that sits thereon, and to the Lamb for ever and ever? And wilt thou hang thy harp upon the willows, and go drooping up and down the world, as if there was no God, no grace, no throne of grace, to apply thyself unto for mercy and grace to help in time of need? Hark; dost thou not hear them what they say? "Worthy," say they, "is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven"—where they are—"and on the earth"—where thou art—"and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are therein, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

And this is written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope; and that the drooping ones might come boldly to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

BUNYAN'S TEMPTATIONS.

In general, God was pleased to take this course with me: First, to suffer me to be afflicted with temptations concerning the truths of the gospel, and then reveal them to

me; as sometimes I should lie under great guilt for sin, even crushed to the ground therewith; and then the Lord would show me the death of Christ, yea, and so sprinkle my conscience with his blood, that I should find, and that before I was aware, that in that conscience where but just now did reign and rage the law, even there would rest and abide the peace and love of God through Christ.

Thus by the strange and unusual assaults of the tempter, my soul was like a broken vessel driven as with the winds, and tossed, sometimes headlong into despair, sometimes upon the covenant of works, and sometimes to wish that the new covenant and the conditions thereof might, so far forth as I thought myself concerned, be turned another way and changed. But in all these, I was as those that jostle against the rocks; more broken, scattered, and rent. Oh, the unthought-of imaginations, frights, fears, and terrors that are effected by a thorough application of guilt yielding to desperation. This is the man that hath his dwelling among the tombs, with the dead—that is always crying out, and cutting himself with stones. But I say, all in vain; desperation will not comfort him, the old covenant will not save him: nay, heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle of the word and law of grace will fail or be removed. This I saw, this I felt, and under this I groaned. Yet this advantage I got thereby, namely, a further confirmation of the certainty of the way of salvation, and that the Scriptures were the word of God. Oh, I cannot now express what I then saw and felt of the steadfastness of Jesus Christ, the Rock of man's salvation: what was done could not be undone, added to, nor altered.

Often when I have been making towards the promise, John 6:30, I have seen as if the Lord would refuse my soul for ever; I was often as if I had run upon the pikes, and as if the Lord had thrust at me, to keep me from him.

as with a flaming sword. Then would I think of Esther, who went to petition the king contrary to the law. I thought also of Benhadad's servants, who went with ropes upon their heads to their enemies for mercy. The woman of Canaan also, that would not be daunted though called a *dog* by Christ, and the man that went to borrow bread at midnight, were also great encouragements unto me.

I never saw such heights and depths in grace and love and mercy, as I saw after this temptation. Great sins draw out great grace; and where guilt is most terrible and fierce, there the mercy of God in Christ, when showed to the soul, appears most high and mighty. When Job had passed through his calamity, he had twice as much as he had before. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ our Lord.

If ever Satan and I did strive for any word of God in all my life, it was for this good word of Christ: "Him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out;" he at one end, and I at the other. Oh, what work we made. It was for this, in John 6:30, I say, that we did so tug and strive: he pulled, and I pulled; but, God be praised, I overcame him and got sweetness from it.

I prayed to God, in prison, that he would comfort me, and give me strength to do and suffer what he should call me to; yet no comfort appeared, but all continued hid. I was also at this time so really possessed with the thought of death, that oft I was as if on the ladder with a rope about my neck: only this was some encouragement to me: I thought I might now have an opportunity to speak my last words unto a multitude, which I supposed would come to see me die; and thought I, if it must be so, if God will but convert one soul by my last words, I shall not count my life thrown away nor lost.

But yet all the things of God were kept out of my sight, and still the tempter followed me with, But whither must

you go when you die? What will become of you? Where will you be found in another world? What evidence have you for heaven and glory, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified? Thus was I tossed for many weeks, and knew not what to do; at last, this consideration fell with weight upon me, That it was for the word and way of God that I was in this condition; wherefore, I was engaged not to flinch a hair's breadth from it.

I thought, also, that God might choose whether he would give me comfort now, or at the hour of death; but I might not therefore choose whether I would hold my profession or no. I was bound, but he was free: yea, it was my duty to stand to his word, whether he would ever look upon me, or save me at the last. Wherefore, thought I, the point being thus, I am for going on and venturing my eternal state with Christ, whether I have comfort here or no: if God doth not come in, thought I, I will leap off the ladder even blindfold into eternity, sink or swim, come heaven come hell. Lord Jesus, if thou wilt catch me, do; if not, I will venture for thy name.

Before I had got thus far out of these my temptations, I did greatly long to see some ancient godly man's experience, who had writ some hundreds of years before I was born; for those who had writ in our days, I thought—but I desire them now to pardon me—that they had writ only that which others felt; or else had, through the strength of their wits and parts, studied to answer such objections as they perceived others were perplexed with, without going themselves down into the deep. Well, after many such longings in my mind, the God in whose hands are all our days and ways, did cast into my hand one day a book of Martin Luther's: it was his Comment on the Galatians; it was also so old that it was ready to fall piece from piece, if I did but turn it over. Now I was pleased much that such an old book had fallen into my hands; the which

when I had but a little way perused, I found my condition in his experience so largely and profoundly handled, as if this book had been written out of my heart. This made me marvel; for thus thought I, this man could not know any thing of the state of Christians now, but must needs write and speak the experience of former days.

Besides, he doth most gravely also, in that book, debate of the rise of these temptations, namely, blasphemy, desperation, and the like; showing that the law of Moses, as well as the devil, death, and hell, hath a very great hand therein: the which, at first, was very strange to me; but considering and watching, I found it so indeed. But of particulars here I intend nothing; only this methinks I must let fall before all men, I do prefer this book of Martin Luther upon the Galatians, excepting the Holy Bible, before all the books that ever I have seen, as most fit for a wounded conscience.

XVI. SECURITY OF CHRISTIANS.

Christians, were you awake, here would be matter of wonder to you, to see a man assaulted with all the power of hell, and yet come off a conqueror. Is it not a wonder to see a poor creature, who in himself is weaker than the moth, stand against and overcome all devils, all the world, all his lusts and corruptions? Or if he fall, is it not a wonder to see him, when devils and guilt are upon him, rise again, stand upon his feet again, walk with God again, and persevere after all this in the faith and holiness of the gospel? He that knows himself, wonders; he that knows temptation, wonders; he that knows what falls and guilt mean, wonders: indeed, perseverance is a wonderful thing and is managed by the power of God; for he only "is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy."

He that is saved must, when this world can hold him no longer, have a safe conduct to heaven; for that is the place where they that are saved must to the full enjoy their salvation. Here we are saved by faith and hope of glory; but there we that are saved shall enjoy the end of our faith and hope, even the salvation of our souls.

But now for a poor creature to be brought thither, this is the life of the point. But how shall I come thither? There are heights and depths to hinder. Rom. 8: 38, 39. Suppose the poor Christian is upon a sick-bed, beset with a thousand fears, and ten thousand at the end of that—sick-bed fears, and they are sometimes dreadful ones: fears that are begotten by the review of the sin perhaps of forty years' profession—fears that are begotten by fearful suggestions of the devil, the sight of death and the grave, and it may be of hell itself—fears that are begotten by the withdrawing and silence of God and Christ. But now, out of all these the Lord will save his people; not one sin, nor fear, nor devil shall hinder, nor the grave nor hell disappoint thee. But how must this be? Why, thou must have a safe conduct to heaven. What conduct? A conduct of angels. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation?"

These angels therefore are not to fail them that are saved, but must, as commissioned of God, come down from heaven to do this office for them. They must come, I say, and take the care of our souls, to conduct them safely into Abraham's bosom. It is not our meanness in the world, nor our weakness of faith, that shall hinder this; nor shall the loathsomeness of our diseases make these delicate spirits shy of taking this charge upon them. Lazarus the beggar found this a truth—a beggar so despised of the rich glutton that he was not suffered to come within his gate; a beggar full of sores and noisome putrefaction—yet behold, when he dies angels come from heaven to fetch him thither.

True, death-bed temptations are ofttimes the most vio-

lent, because then the devil plays his last game with us; he is never to assault us more. Besides, perhaps God sufereth it thus to be that the entering into heaven may be the sweeter, and ring of this salvation the louder. O it is a blessed thing for God to be our God and our guide, even unto death, and then for his angels to conduct us safely to glory. This is saving indeed.

Mercy seems to be asleep when we are sinking; for then we are as if all things were careless of us; but it is but as a lion couchant, it will awake in time for our help.

There are those that have been in the pit, Psa. 40:2, now upon mount Zion, with the harps of God in their hands, and with the song of the Lamb in their mouths.

God hath set a Saviour against sin, a heaven against a hell, light against darkness, good against evil, and the breadth and length and depth and height of the grace that is in himself for my good, against all the power and strength and subtlety of every enemy.

Is it not a thing amazing, to see one poor inconsiderable man, in a spirit of faith and patience, overcome all the threatenings, cruelties, afflictions, and sorrows that a whole world can lay upon him? None can quail him, none can crush him, none can bend down his spirit; none can make him forsake what he has received of God, a commandment to hold fast. His holy, harmless, and profitable notions, because they are spiced with grace, yield to him more comfort, joy, and peace; and do kindle in his soul a goodly fire of love to and zeal for God that all the waters of the world shall never be able to quench.

Now, a creation none can destroy but a creator, wherefore, here is comfort. But again, God hath created us in Christ Jesus; that's another thing. The sun is created in

the heavens; the stars are created in the heavens; the moon is created in the heavens. Who can reach them, touch them, destroy them, but the Creator? Why, this is the case of the saint, because he has to do with a Creator: he is fastened to Christ, yea, is in him by an act of creation. So that unless Christ and the creation of the Holy Ghost can be destroyed, he is safe that is suffering according to the will of God, and that hath committed the keeping of his soul to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

The strife is now, Who shall be Lord of all: whether Satan the prince of this world, or Christ Jesus the Son of God; or which can lay the best claim to God's elect, he that produces their sins against them, or he that laid down his heart's blood a price of redemption for them. Who then shall condemn, when Christ has died and does also make intercession?

Stand still, angels, and behold how the Father divides his Son a "portion with the great," and how he "divides the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors, and did bear the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." The grace of God and the blood of Christ will, before the end of the world, make brave work among the sons of men. They shall come for a wonderment to God by Christ, and be saved for a wonderment for Christ's sake. "Behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim."

"What man is he that feareth the Lord?" says David; "him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose."

Now, to be taught of God, what is like it? Yea, what is like being taught in the way that thou shalt choose? Thou hast chosen the way to life, God's way; but perhaps thy ignorance about it is so great, and those that tempt thee

to turn aside are so many and so subtle, that they seem to outwit thee and confound thee with their guile. Well, but the Lord whom thou fearest will not leave thee to thy ignorance, nor yet to thine enemies' power or subtlety, but will take it upon himself to be thy teacher and thy guide, and that in the way that thou hast chosen. Hear, then, and behold thy privilege, O thou that fearest the Lord; and—whoever wanders, turns aside, and swerveth from the way of salvation, whoever is benighted and lost in the midst of darkness—thou shalt find the way to heaven and the glory that thou hast chosen.

There is between those that have taken sanctuary in Christ, and the bottomless pit, an invincible and mighty wall of grace and heavenly power, and of the merits of Christ to save to the utmost all and every one that are thus fled to him for safety.

Oh, how my soul did at this time [while in spiritual darkness] prize the preservation that God did set about his people. Ah, how safely did I see them walk whom God had hedged in. Now did those blessed places that spake of God's keeping his people, shine like the sun before me, though not to comfort me, yet to show me the blessed state and heritage of those whom the Lord had blessed. Now I saw that as God had his hand in all the providences and dispensations that overtake his elect, so he had his hand in all the temptations that they had to sin against him; not to animate them in wickedness, but to choose their temptations and troubles for them, and also to leave them for a time to such things only as might not destroy, but humble them—as might not put them beyond, but lay them in the way of the renewing of his mercy. But Oh, what love, what care, what kindness and mercy did I now see, mixing itself with the most severe and dreadful of all God's ways to his people! He would let David, Hezekiah, Solomon,

Peter, and others fall; but he would not let them fall into the sin unpardonable, nor into hell for sin. O, thought I, these be the men that God hath loved—these be the men that God, though he chasticeth them, keeps in safety by him, and whom he makes to abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

Surely his salvation, his saving, pardoning grace, is nigh them that fear him; that is, to save them out of the hand of their spiritual enemies. The devil and sin and death do always wait even to devour them that fear the Lord; but to deliver them from these, his salvation doth attend them. So, then, if Satan tempts, here is their salvation nigh; if sin by breaking forth beguiles them, here is God's salvation nigh them; yea, if death itself shall suddenly seize upon them, why, here is their God's salvation nigh them.

I have seen that great men's little children must go no whither without their nurses be at hand. If they go abroad, their nurses must go with them; if they go to meals, their nurses must go with them; if they go to bed, their nurses must go with them; yea, and if they fall asleep, their nurses must stand by them.

O, my brethren, those little ones that fear the Lord are the children of the highest; therefore they shall not walk alone, be at their spiritual meats alone, go to their sick-beds or to their graves alone: the salvation of their God is nigh them, to deliver them from the evil. This is then the glory that dwells in the land of them that fear the Lord.

"He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him." Where now is the man that feareth the Lord? let him hearken to this. What sayest thou, poor soul? Will this content thee? the Lord fulfil thy desires. O thou that fearest the Lord, what is thy desire? "All my desire," says David, "is all my salvation;" so sayest thou, "All my salvation is all my desire?" Well, the desire of thy soul is

granted thee; yea, God himself hath engaged himself even to fulfil this thy desire. "He will fulfil the desires of them that fear him; he will hear their cry, and will save them." O this desire, when it cometh, what "a tree of life" will it be to thee! Thou desirest to be rid of thy present trouble; the Lord shall rid thee out of trouble. Thou desirest to be delivered from temptation; the Lord shall deliver thee out of temptation. Thou desirest to be delivered from thy body of death; and the Lord shall change this thy vile body, that it may be like to his glorious body. Thou desirest to be in the presence of God, and among the angels in heaven; this thy desire also shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt be made equal to the angels. Exod. 6:6; 2 Peter, 2:9; Phil. 3:20, 21; Luke 16:22; 26:35, 36. "Oh, but it is long first." Well, learn first to live upon thy portion in the promise of it, and that will make thy expectation of it sweet. God will fulfil thy desires; God will do it, though it tarry long: "Wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

XVII. THE PROMISES.

God hath strewed all the way from the gate of hell where thou wast, coming sinner, to the gate of heaven whither thou art going, with flowers out of his own garden. Behold how the promises, invitations, calls, and encouragements, like lilies, lie about thee. Take heed thou dost not tread them under foot.

You say you believe the Scriptures to be the word of God. I say, Wert thou ever quickened from a dead state by the power of the Spirit of Christ through the covenant of promise? I tell thee from the Lord, if thou hast been, thou hast felt such a quickening power in the words of Christ, that thou hast been lifted out of the dead condition

thou before wert in; and that when thou wast under the guilt of sin, the curse of the law, the power of the devil, and the justice of the great God, thou hast been enabled by the power of God in Christ, revealed to thee by the Spirit through and by the Scripture, to look sin, death, hell, the devil, and the law, and all things that are at enmity with thee, with boldness and comfort in the face, through the blood, death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ, made mention of in the Scriptures.

On this account, O how excellent are the Scriptures to thy soul! O how much virtue dost thou see in such a promise, in such an invitation! They are so large as to say, Christ will in nowise cast me out. My crimson sins shall be as white as snow.

I tell thee, friend, there are some promises through and by which the Lord has helped me to lay hold of Jesus Christ, that I would not have out of the Bible for as much gold and silver as can lie between York and London piled up to the stars; because through them Christ is pleased by his Spirit to convey comfort to my soul. I say, when the law curses, when the devil tempts, when hell-fire flames in my conscience, my sins with the guilt of them tearing of me, then is Christ revealed so sweetly to my poor soul through the promises, that all is forced to fly and leave off to accuse my soul. So also when the world frowns, when the enemies rage and threaten to kill me, then also the precious promises do weigh down all, and comfort the soul against all.

The grace of God and the Spirit of grace are called or compared to a river, to answer those unsatiable desires, and to wash away those mountainous doubts, that attend those who indeed do thirst for that drink. The man that thirsteth with spiritual thirst, fears nothing more than that there is not enough to quench his thirst: all the promises and sayings of God's ministers to such a man, seem but as thim-

bles instead of bowls: I mean, so long as his thirst and doubts walk hand in hand together. There is not enough in this promise, I find not enough in that promise, to quench the drought of my thirsting soul. He that thirsteth aright, nothing but God can quench his thirst. "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." Psalm 43 : 2 ; 63 : 1 ; 143 : 6. Well, what shall be done for this man? Will his God humor him, and answer his desires? Mark what follows: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none"—when all the promises seem to be dry, and like clouds that return after the rain—"and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." Aye, but, Lord, what wilt thou do to quench their thirst? "I will open rivers," saith he, "in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." Behold, here are rivers and fountains, a pool and springs, and all to quench the thirst of them that thirst for God.

What greater argument to holiness, than to see the scriptures so furnished with promises of grace and salvation by Christ, that a man can hardly cast his eye into the Bible but he espies one or another of them? Who would not live in such a house, or be a servant to such a prince; who, besides his exceeding in good conditions, has gold and silver as common in his palace as stones are by the highway side?

It sometimes so falleth out, that the very promise we have thought could not reach us to comfort us by any means, has at another time swallowed us up with joy unspeakable: Christ the true prophet has the right understanding of the word as an Advocate, has pleaded it before God against Satan; and having overcome him at the common law, he has sent to let us know it by his good Spirit, to our comfort and the confusion of our enemies.

XVIII. CHRISTIAN GRACES.

FAITH.

Faith! Peter saith, faith, in the very trial of it, is much more precious than gold that perisheth. If so, what is the worth or value that is in the grace itself?

Faith is so great an artist in arguing and reasoning with the soul, that it will bring over the hardest heart that it hath to deal with. It will bring to my remembrance at once, both my vileness against God, and his goodness towards me; it will show me, that though I deserve not to breathe in the air, yet God will have me an heir of glory.

Faith is the mother-grace, the root-grace, the grace that has all others in the bowels of it, and that from which all others flow.

Faith will suck sweetness out of God's rod; but unbelief can find no comfort in his greatest mercies.

Faith makes great burdens light; but unbelief maketh light ones intolerably heavy.

Faith helpeth us when we are down; but unbelief throws us down when we are up.

Unbelief may be called the *white devil;* for it oftentimes, in its mischievous doing in the soul, shows as if it was an angel of light; yea, it acteth like a counsellor of heaven.

It is that sin above all others that most suiteth the wisdom of our flesh. The wisdom of our flesh thinks it prudent to question a while, to stand back a while, to hearken to both sides a while; and not to be rash, sudden, or unadvised in too bold a presuming upon Jesus Christ.

There is nothing like faith to help at a pinch; faith dissolves doubts, as the sun drives away the mists. And

that you may not be put out, know your time of believing is always. There are times when some graces may be out of use; but there is no time wherein faith can be said to be so. Faith is the eye, the mouth, the hand, and one of these is of use all day long. Faith is to see, to receive, to work, or to eat; and a Christian should be seeing, or receiving, or working, or feeding, all day long. Let it rain, let it blow, let it thunder, let it lighten, a Christian must still believe.

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked:" to quench them, though they come from him as kindled with the very fire of hell. None knows, save he that feels it, how burning hot the fiery darts of Satan are; and how, when darted, they kindle upon our flesh and unbelief; neither can any know the power and worth of faith to quench them, but he that hath it and hath power to act it.

There are three things in faith, that directly tend to make a man depart from iniquity.

1. It apprehendeth the truth of the being and greatness of God, and so it aweth the spirit of a man.

2. It apprehendeth the love of this God in Christ, and so it conquereth and overcometh the spirit of a man.

3. It apprehendeth the sweetness and blessedness of the nature of the godhead, and thence persuadeth the soul to desire here communion with him, that it may be holy, and the enjoyment of him when this world is ended, that it may be happy in and by him for ever.

There is a man sows his field with wheat, but as he sows, some is covered with great clods: now, that grows as well as the rest, though it runs not upright as yet; it grows, and yet is kept down. So do thy desires—when one shall remove the clod, the blade will soon point upward.

I know thy mind; that which keeps thee that thou canst not yet arrive to this, to desire to depart and to be with Christ, is because some strong doubt or clod of unbelief as to thy eternal welfare lies hard upon thy desiring spirit. Now let but Jesus Christ remove this clod, and thy desires will quickly start up to be gone.

UPON THE SWALLOW.

This pretty bird, O how she flies and sings!
But could she do so if she had not wings?
Her wings bespeak my faith, her songs my peace:
When I believe and sing, my doubtings cease.

TRUST.

Why, this is the case, thou art bound for heaven, but the way thither is dangerous. It is beset everywhere with evil angels, who would rob thee of thy soul. What now? Why, if thou wouldst go cheerfully on in thy dangerous journey, commit thy treasure, thy soul, to God to keep. And then thou mayest say with comfort, "Well, that care is over. For whatever I meet with in my way thither, my soul is safe enough; the thieves, if they meet me, cannot come at that; I know to whom I have committed my soul, and I am persuaded that he will keep that to my joy and everlasting comfort against the great day."

When a tyrant goes to dispossess a neighboring prince of what is lawfully his own, the men that he employeth at arms to overcome and get the land, fight for half-crowns and the like, and are content with the wages; but the tyrant is for the kingdom, nothing will serve him but the kingdom. This is the case: Men, when they persecute, are for the stuff; but the devil is for the soul, nor will any thing less than that satisfy him. Let him then that is a sufferer, commit the keeping of his soul to God, lest stuff and soul and all be lost at once.

Now, to commit this soul to God, is to carry it to him, to lift it to him upon bended knees, and to pray him for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, to take it into his holy care, and to let it be under his keeping. Also, that he will please to deliver it from all those snares that are laid for it between this and the next world, and that he will see that it be forthcoming, safe and sound, at the great and terrible judgment, notwithstanding so many have engaged themselves against it.

FAITH AND HOPE.

No faith, no hope. To hope without faith, is to see without eyes, or to expect without grounds; for "faith is the substance of things hoped for," as well with respect to the grace, as to the doctrine of faith.

Faith has its excellency in this, hope in that, and love in another thing. Faith will do that which hope cannot do, hope can do that which faith cannot do, and love can do things distinct from both their doings. Faith goes in the van, hope in the body, and love brings up the rear; and thus now abideth faith, hope, and charity.

Faith is the mother-grace, for hope is born of her, but charity floweth from them both.

Faith comes by hearing, hope by experience. Faith comes by hearing the word of God, hope by the credit that faith has given to it. Faith believes the truth of the word, hope waits for the fulfilling of it. Faith lays hold of that end of the promise that is next to us, to wit, as it is in the Bible; hope lays hold of that end of the promise that is fastened to the mercy-seat. For the promise is like a mighty cable that is fastened by one end to a ship, and by the other to the anchor. The soul is the ship where faith is, and to which the hither end of this cable is fastened; but hope is the anchor that is at the other end of this cable, and "which entereth into that within the veil."

Thus faith and hope getting hold of both ends of the promise, they carry it safely ALL away.

Faith looks to Christ as dead, buried, and ascended; and hope to his second coming. Faith looks to him for justification, hope for glory.

Faith fights for doctrine, hope for a reward; faith for what is in the Bible, hope for what is in heaven.

Faith purifies the heart from bad principles, hope from bad manners. 2 Peter, 3 : 11, 14

Faith sets hope at work, hope sets patience at work. Faith says to hope, Look for what is promised; hope says to faith, So I do, and will wait for it too.

Faith looks through the word of God in Christ; hope looks through faith, beyond the world, to glory.

Thus faith saves, and thus hope saves. Faith saves by laying hold of God by Christ; hope saves by prevailing with the soul to suffer all troubles, afflictions, and adversities that it meets with betwixt this and the world to come, for the sake thereof. Take the matter in this plain similitude:

There was a king that adopted such a one to be his child, and clothed him with the attire of the children of the king, and promised him that if he would fight his father's battles and walk in his father's ways, he should at last share in his father's kingdom. He has received the adoption and the king's robe, but not yet his part in the kingdom; but now, hope of a share in that will make him fight the king's battles, and also tread the king's paths. Yea, and though he should meet with many things that have a tendency to deter him from so doing, yet thoughts of the interest promised in the kingdom, and hopes to enjoy it, will make him cut his way through those difficulties, and so save him from the ruin that those obstructions would bring upon him, and will, in conclusion, usher him into a personal possession and enjoyment of that inheritance.

Hope has a thick skin, and will endure many a blow; it will put on patience as a vestment, it will wade through

a sea of blood, it will endure all things if it be of the right kind, for the joy that is set before it. Hence patience is called "patience of hope," because it is hope that makes the soul exercise patience and long-suffering under the cross, until the time comes to enjoy the crown.

Learn of Abraham not to faint, stumble, or doubt, at the sight of your own weakness; for if you do, hope will stay below, and creak in the wheels as it goes, because it will want the oil of faith.

HOPE.

Hope is the grace that relieves the soul when dark and weary. Hope calls upon the soul not to forget how far it is arrived in its progress towards heaven. Hope will point and show it the gate afar off; and therefore it is called the *hope of salvation*.

True hope, in the right exercise of it upon God, makes no stumble at weakness or darkness, but rather worketh up the soul to some comfort by these. Thus Abraham's hope wrought by his weakness. And as for the dark, it is its element to act in that, "For hope which is seen is not hope."

Hope is a head-grace and governing. There are several lusts in the soul that cannot be mastered, if hope be not in exercise—especially if the soul be in great and sore trials. There is peevishness and impatience, there is fear and despair, there is doubting and misconstruing of God's present hand; and all these become masters, if hope be not stirring; nor can any grace besides put a stop to their tumultuous raging in the soul. But now, hope in God makes them all hush, takes away the occasion of their working, and lays the soul at the foot of God.

PATIENCE.

"And he stayed yet other seven days." This staying

shows us that he exercised patience, waiting God's leisure till the flood should be taken away. This grace, therefore, has yet seven days' work to do, before he obtained any further testimony that the waters were decreasing. O this staying work is hard work. Alas, sometimes patience is accompanied with so much heat and feverishness, that every hour seems seven until the end of the trial, and the blessing promised be possessed by the waiting soul. It may be, Noah might not be altogether herein a stranger. I am sure the psalmist was not, in that he often under affliction cries, But how long, O Lord; for ever? Make haste. O Lord, how long?

LOVE.

Love is the very quintessence of all the graces of the gospel.

FEAR.

It seems to me as if this grace of fear was the darling grace, the grace that God sets his heart upon at the highest rate. As it were, he embraces and lays in his bosom the man that hath and grows strong in this grace of the fear of God.

This grace of fear is the softest and most tender of God's honor of all the graces. It is that tender, sensible, and trembling grace, that keepeth the soul upon its continual watch. To keep a good watch is, you know, a wonderful safety to a place that is in continual danger because of the enemy. Why, this is the grace that setteth the watch, and that keepeth the watchman awake.

A man cannot watch as he should, if he be destitute of fear: let him be confident, and he sleeps; he unadvisedly lets into the garrison those that should not come there.

This fear of the Lord is the pulse of the soul; and as

some pulses beat stronger, some weaker, so is this grace of fear in the soul. They that beat best are a sign of best life; but they that beat worst, show that life is present. As long as the pulse beats, we count not that the man is dead, though weak; and this fear, where it is, preserves to everlasting life. Pulses there are also that are intermitting; to wit, such as have their times of beating for a little, a little time to stop, and beat again: true, these are dangerous pulses, which, nevertheless, are a sign of life. This fear of God also is sometimes like this intermitting pulse; there are times when it forbears to work, and then it works again. David had an intermitting pulse; Peter had an intermitting pulse, as also many other of the saints of God. I call that an intermitting pulse, with reference to the fear we speak of, when there is some obstruction by the workings of corruption in the soul: I say, some obstruction from and hinderance of the continual motion of this fear of God; yet none of these—though they are various, and some of them signs of weakness—are signs of death, but life. "I will put my fear in their heart, and they shall not depart from me."

Where the fear of the Lord and sin are, it will be with the soul as it was with Israel when Amri and Tibni strove to reign among them both at once. One of them must be put to death, they cannot live together. Sin must down, for the fear of the Lord begetteth in the soul a hatred against it, an abhorrence of it; therefore sin must die, that is, as to the affections and lusts of it.

"Thy heart shall fear and be enlarged"—enlarged towards God, enlarged to his ways, enlarged to his holy people, enlarged in love after the salvation of others. Indeed, when this fear of God is wanting, though the profession be never so famous, the heart is shut up and straitened, and nothing is done in that princely free spirit,

which is called "the spirit of the fear of the Lord," but with grudging, legally, or with desire of vain glory. Psa. 51 : 12 ; Isa. 11 : 2.

If a king will keep a town secure to himself, let him be sure to man sufficiently the main fort thereof. If he have twenty thousand men well armed, if they lie scattered here and there, the town may be taken for all that ; but if the main fort be well manned, then the town is more secure. What if a man had all the parts, yea, all the arts of men and angels, that will not keep the heart to God.

But when the heart, this principal fort, is possessed with the fear of God, then he is safe, not else.

O they are a sweet couple, to wit, a Christian conversation coupled with fear.

Your great, ranting, swaggering roysters, that are ignorant of the nature of this fear of God, count it a poor, sneaking, pitiful, cowardly spirit in men to fear and tremble before the Lord. But whoso looks back to jails and gibbets, to the sword and the burning stake, shall see in the martyrs *there* the most mighty and invincible spirit that has been in the world.

This grace of fear can make the man that in many other things is not capable of serving God, serve him better than those that have all else without it. Poor Christian man, thou hast scarce been able to do any thing for God all thy days, but only to fear the Lord. Thou art no preacher, and so canst not do him service that way : thou art no rich man, and so canst not do him service with outward substance : thou art no wise man, and so canst not do any thing that way ; but here is thy mercy, thou fearest God. Though thou canst not preach, thou canst fear God.

Though thou hast no bread to feed the belly, nor fleece to clothe the back of the poor, thou canst fear God. O how blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, because this duty of fearing of God is an act of the mind, and may be done by the man that is destitute of all things but that holy and blessed mind.

Blessed, therefore, is that man; for God hath not laid the comfort of his people in the doing of external duties, nor the salvation of their souls, but in believing, loving, and fearing God. Neither hath he laid these things in actions done in their health, nor in the due management of their most excellent parts, but in the receiving of Christ, and fear of God; the which, good Christian, thou mayest do, and do acceptably, even though thou shouldst lie bedrid all thy days; thou mayest also be sick and believe, be sick and love, be sick and fear God, and so be a blessed man.

And here the poor Christian hath something to answer them that reproach him for his ignoble pedigree, and shortness of the glory of the wisdom of the world. True, may that man say, I was taken out of the dunghill, I was born in a base and low estate; but I fear God. I have no worldly greatness, nor excellency of natural parts, but I fear God.

When Obadiah met with Elijah, he gave him no worldly and fantastical compliment, nor did he glory in his promotion by Ahab the king of Israel, but gravely and after a gracious manner said, "I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth." Also, when the mariners inquired of Jonah, saying, "What is thine occupation, and whence comest thou; what is thy country, and of what people art thou?" this was the answer he gave them: "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land." Jonah 1:8, 9.

Indeed this answer is the highest and most noble in the world, nor are there any, save a few, that in truth can thus express themselves, though other answers they have

enough: most can say, I have wisdom, or might, or riches, or friends, or health, or the like; these are common, and are greatly boasted in by the most; but the man that feareth God can say, when they say to him, What art thou? "I thy servant do fear the Lord:" he is the man of many, he is to be honored of men, though this, to wit, that he feareth the Lord, is all that he hath in this world. He hath the thing, the honor, the life, and glory, that is lasting; his blessedness will abide when all men's but his is buried in the dust, in shame and contempt.

Dost thou fear God? The least *drachm* of that fear giveth the privilege to be blessed with the greatest saint: "He will bless them that fear the Lord, small and great." Psalm 115:13. Art thou in thine own thoughts, or in the thoughts of others, of these last small ones, small in grace, small in gifts, small in esteem upon this account? Yet if thou fearest God, if thou fearest God indeed, thou art certainly blessed with the best of saints. The least star stands as fixed as the brightest of them all, in heaven. "He shall bless them that fear him, small and great." He shall bless them, that is, with the same blessing of eternal life. For the difference in degrees of grace in saints doth not make the blessing, as to its nature, differ. It is the same heaven, the same life, the same glory, and the same eternity of felicity, that they are in the text promised to be blessed with. Christ at the day of judgment particularly mentioneth and owneth the least: "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least." The least then was there, in his kingdom and in his glory, as well as the greatest of all.

Dost thou fear God? Why, the Holy Ghost hath on purpose indited for thee a whole psalm to sing concerning thyself. So that thou mayest even as thou art, in thy calling, bed, journey, or whenever, sing out thine own blessed and happy condition to thine own comfort, and the

comfort of thy fellows. The psalm is called the 128th Psalm.

"Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; he is their help and their shield." Psalm 115:11. Now what a privilege is this: an exhortation in general to sinners, as sinners, to trust in him, is a privilege great and glorious; but for a man to be singled out from his neighbors, for a man to be spoken to from heaven as it were by name, and to be told that God has given him a license, a special and peculiar grant to trust in him, this is abundantly more; and yet this is the grant that God has given that man that feareth the Lord.

"O fear the Lord, ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord"—that fear him—"shall want no good thing." Psalm 34:9, 10.

Not any thing that God sees good for them, shall those men want that fear the Lord. If health will do them good, if sickness will do them good, if riches will do them good, if poverty will do them good, if life will do them good, if death will do them good, then they shall not want them; neither shall any of these come nigh them, if they will not do them good.

Sinner, hast thou deferred to fear the Lord? Is thy heart still so stubborn as not to say yet, Let us fear the Lord? O, the Lord hath taken notice of this thy rebellion, and is preparing some dreadful judgments for thee. "Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord; shall not my soul be avenged of such a nation as this?"

Sinner, why shouldst thou pull vengeance down upon thee? why shouldst thou pull vengeance down from heaven upon thee? Look up; perhaps thou hast already been pulling this great while, to pull it down upon thee. Oh, pull no longer; why shouldst thou be thine own ex-

ecutioner? Fall down upon thy knees, man, and up with thy heart and thy hands to the God that dwells in the heavens; cry, yea, cry aloud, "Lord, unite my heart to fear thy name, and do not harden mine heart from thy fear." Thus holy men have cried before thee, and by crying have prevented judgment.

HUMILITY.

I take the pinnacles on the top of the temple to be types of those lofty, airy notions, with which some delight themselves, while they hover like birds above the solid and godly truths of Christ. Satan attempted to entertain Christ Jesus with this type and antitype at once, when he set him on one of the pinnacles of the temple, and offered to thrust him upon a false confidence in God, by a false and unsound interpretation of a text. Matt. 4 : 5, 6; Luke 4 : 9–11.

You have some men who cannot be content to worship in the temple, but must be aloft; no place will serve them but pinnacles—pinnacles, that they may be speaking in and to the air, that they may be promoting their heady notions, instead of solid truth—not considering that now they are where the devil would have them be. They strut upon their points, their pinnacles; but let them look to it: there is difficult standing upon pinnacles; their neck, their soul, is in danger. We read, God is in his temple, not upon these pinnacles. Psalm 4; Hab. 2 : 20.

It is true, Christ was once upon one of these; but the devil set him there, with intent to dash him in pieces by a fall; and yet even then told him, if he would venture to tumble down, he should be kept from dashing his foot against a stone. To be there, therefore, was one of Christ's temptations; consequently one of Satan's stratagems: nor went he thither of his own accord, for he knew that there was danger; he loved not to clamber pinnacles.

This should teach Christians to be low and little in

their own eyes, and to forbear to intrude into airy and vain speculations, and to take heed of being puffed up with a foul and empty mind.

ZEAL.

The loaves or showbread in the temple were to have frankincense strewed upon them as they stood upon the golden table, which was a type of the sweet perfumes of the sanctification of the Holy Ghost.

They were to be set upon the pure table, new and hot, to show that God delights in the company of new and warm believers. "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth; when Israel was a child, I loved him." Men at first conversion are like to a cake well baked, and new taken from the oven; they are warm, and cast forth a very fragrant scent, especially when, as warm, sweet increase is strewed upon them.

When the showbread was old and stale, it was to be taken away, and new and warm put in its place, to show that God has but little delight in the service of his own people, when their duties grow stale and mouldy. Therefore he removed his old, stale, mouldy church of the Jews from before him, and set in their room upon the golden table the warm church of the Gentiles.

Zeal without knowledge is like a mettled horse without eyes, or like a sword in a madman's hand; and there is no knowledge where there is not the word.

REPENTANCE.

Repentance carries with it a divine rhetoric, and persuades Christ to forgive a multitude of sins committed against him.

One difference between true and false repentance lieth in this: the man who truly repents crieth out against his

heart; but the other, as Eve, against the serpent, or something else.

There are abundance of dry-eyed Christians in the world, and abundance of dry-eyed duties too—duties that never were wet with the tears of contrition and repentance.

Take heed that a sin in thy life goes not unrepented of, for that will make a flaw in thine evidence, a wound in thy conscience, and a breach in thy peace; and a hundred to one if at last it doth not drive all the grace in thee into so dark a corner of thy heart, that thou shalt not be able, for a time, by all the torches that are burning in the gospel, to find it out to thy own comfort and consolation.

As vices hang together, and have the links of a chain, dependence one upon another, even so the graces of the Spirit also are the fruits of one another, and have such dependence on each other that the one cannot be without the other.

No faith, no fear of God: devil's faith, devil's fear; saints' faith, saints' fear.

XIX. PRAYER.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PRAYER.

What is prayer? A sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Spirit, for such things as God hath promised.

The best prayers have often more groans than words.

Alas, how few there be in the world whose heart and mouth in prayer shall go together. Dost thou, when thou askest for the Spirit, or faith, or love to God, to holiness, to saints, to the word, and the like, ask for them with love to them, desire of them, hungering after them? Oh, this is a mighty thing; and yet prayer is no more before God than as it is seasoned with these blessed qualifications. Wherefore it is said, that while men are praying, God is searching the heart to see what is the meaning of the Spirit, or whether there be the Spirit and his meaning in all that the mouth hath uttered, either by words, sighs, or groans, because it is by him and through his help only that any make prayers according to the will of God. Rom. 8 : 26, 27.

PREPARATION FOR PRAYER.

Before you enter into prayer, ask thy soul these questions: To what end, O my soul, art thou retired into this place? Art thou not come to discourse the Lord in prayer? Is he present, will he hear thee? Is he merciful, will he help thee? Is thy business slight, is it not concerning the welfare of thy soul? What words wilt thou use to move him to compassion?

THE THRONE OF GRACE.

We know the throne of grace from other thrones by the glory that it always appears in when revealed to us of

God: its glory outshines all; there is no such glory to be seen anywhere else, either in heaven or earth. But I say, this comes by the sight that God gives, not by any excellency that there is in my natural understanding, as such: my understanding and apprehension, simply as natural, are blind and foolish; wherefore, when I set to work in mine own spirit and in the power of mine own abilities, to reach to this throne of grace and to perceive somewhat of the glory thereof, then am I dark, rude, foolish; I see nothing, and my heart grows flat, dull, savorless, lifeless, and has no warmth in the duty; but it mounts up with wings like an eagle when the throne is truly apprehended.

This throne is the seat of grace and mercy, and therefore it is called the mercy-seat and throne of grace. This throne turns all into grace, all into mercy; this throne makes all things work together for good. It is said of Saul's sons, 2 Sam. 21 : 10–14, they were not buried after they were hanged until water dropped upon them out of heaven; and it may be said of us, there is nothing suffered to come near us until it is washed in that water that proceeds from the throne of grace. Hence afflictions flow from grace; persecutions flow from grace; poverty, sickness, yea, death itself is now made ours by the grace of God through Christ. Psa. 119 : 67–71; 1 Cor. 3 : 22; Rev. 3 : 19; Heb. 12 : 5–7. O grace, O happy church of God! all things that happen to thee are for Christ's sake turned into grace. They talk of the philosopher's stone, and how if one had it, it would turn all things into gold. Oh, but can it turn all things into grace—can it make all things work together for good? No, no; this quality, virtue, excellency—what shall I call it?—nothing has in it but the grace that reigns on the throne of grace, the river that proceeds from the throne of God. This, this turns majesty, authority, the highest authority, glory, wisdom, faithfulness, justice, and all into grace. Here is a throne;

may God let us see it. John had the honor to see it, and to see the streams proceeding from it. O sweet sight, O heart-cherishing sight! "He showed me a pure river of water of life proceeding out of the throne of God."

Indeed, as was hinted before, in the days of the reign of antichrist there are not those visions of this throne, nor of the river that proceedeth therefrom: now he holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth a cloud upon it; but the preserving, saving benefits thereof we have, as also have all the saints in the most cloudy and dark day. And since we can see so little, we must believe the more; and by believing, give glory to God. We must also labor for more clear scripture knowledge of this throne, for the holy word of God is the perspective-glass by which we may, and the magnifying-glass that will cause us to behold with open face the glory of this Lord. 2 Cor. 3 : 18.

"A throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne;" that is, God. And this intimates his desirable rest for ever; for to sit is to rest, and Christ is his rest for ever. Was it not therefore well worth the seeing—yea, if John had taken the pains to go up thither upon his hands and knees?

It is grace that chooses, it is grace that calleth, it is grace that preserveth, and it is grace that brings to glory, even the grace that, like a river of water of life, proceeds from this "throne of grace;" and hence it is, that from first to last, we must cry, Grace, grace, unto it.

Thus you see what a throne the Christian is invited to: it is a throne of grace whereon doth sit the God of all grace; it is a throne of grace before which the Lord Jesus ministers continually for us; it is a throne of grace sprinkled with the blood, and in the midst of which is a Lamb as it had been slain; it is a throne with a rainbow round about it, which is the token of the everlasting covenant,

and out of which proceeds a river, a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal.

Look then for these signs of the throne of grace, all you that would come to it, and rest not until by some of them you know that you are even come to it: they are all to be seen, have you but eyes; and the sight of them is very delectable, and has a natural tendency to revive and quicken the soul.

PRAYER IN THE NAME OF CHRIST.

He that thinks to find grace at God's hand, and yet enters not into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, will find himself mistaken, and will find a dead instead of a living way. For if not any thing below or besides blood can yield remission on God's part, how should remission be received by us without our acting faith therein? We are justified by his blood, through faith in his blood.

Wherefore look, when thou approachest the throne of grace, that thou give diligence to seek for the "Lamb as it had been slain," that is in the midst of the throne of grace; and then thou wilt have not only a sign that thou presentest thy supplication to God where and as thou shouldst, but there also wilt thou meet with matter to break, to soften, to bend, to bow, and to make thy heart as thou wouldst have it. This sight shall dissolve and melt down the spirit of that man that is upon his knees before the throne of grace for mercy; especially when he shall see, that not his prayers, nor his tears, nor his wants, but the blood of the Lamb, has prevailed with a God of grace to give mercy and grace to an undeserving sinner.

God hath prepared a golden altar for thee to offer thy prayers and tears upon, coming sinner. A golden altar! It is called a *golden altar*, to show what worth it is of in God's account; for this golden altar is Jesus Christ—this altar sanctifies thy gift, and makes thy sacrifice acceptable.

This altar then makes thy groans golden groans, thy tears golden tears, and thy prayers golden prayers, in the eye of that God thou comest to.

BENEFIT OF PRAYER.

Pray often; for prayer is a shield for the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge for Satan.

Look yonder! Ah, methinks mine eyes do see
Clouds edged with silver, as fine garments be;
They look as if they saw the golden face
That makes black clouds most beautiful with grace.

Unto the saints' sweet incense of their prayer,
These smoky curled clouds I do compare;
For as these clouds seem edged or laced with gold,
Their prayers return with blessings manifold.

Prayer is as the pitcher that fetcheth water from the brook, therewith to water the herbs: break the pitcher and it will fetch no water, and for want of water the garden withers.

The godly have found all other places, the throne of grace excepted, empty, and places that hold no water. They have been at mount Sinai for help, but could find nothing there but fire and darkness, but thunder and lightning, but earthquakes and trembling, and a voice of killing words.

They have sought for grace by their own performances; but, alas, they have yielded them nothing but wind and confusion: not a performance, not a duty, not an act in any part of religious worship, but they, looking upon it in the glass of the Lord, do find it specked and defective.

They have sought for grace by their resolutions, their vows, their purposes, and the like; but alas, they all do as the other, discover that they have been very imperfectly managed, and so are such as can by no means help them to grace.

They have gone to their tears, their sorrow, and repentance, if perhaps they might find some help there; but all has fled away like the early dew.

They have gone to God as the great Creator, and have beheld how wonderful his works have been; they have looked to the heavens above, to the earth beneath, and to all their ornaments; but neither have these, nor what is of them, yielded grace to those that had sensible want thereof.

They have gone with these pitchers to their fountains, and have returned empty and ashamed; they found no water, no river of water of life.

Paul, not finding it in the law, despairs to find it in any thing else below, but presently betakes himself to look for it where he had not yet found it: he looked for it by Jesus Christ, who is the throne of grace, where he found it, and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God.

O, when a God of grace is upon a throne of grace, and a poor sinner stands by and begs for grace, and that in the name of a gracious Christ, in and by the help of the Spirit of grace, can it be otherwise but such a sinner must obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need?

All the sorrow that is mixed with our Christianity proceeds, as the procuring cause, from ourselves, not from the throne of grace; for that is the place where our tears are wiped away, and also where we hang up our crutches: the streams thereof are pure and clear, not muddy nor frozen, but warm and delightful, and they make glad the city of God.

DISCOURAGEMENTS IN PRAYER.

There is an aptness in those that come to the throne of grace, to cast every degree of faith away that carries not in it self-evidence of its own being and nature, thinking that if it be faith, it must be known to the soul; yea, if it be

faith, it will do so and so—even so as the highest degree of faith will do: when, alas, faith is sometimes in a calm, sometimes up, and sometimes down, and sometimes in conflict with sin, death, and the devil. Faith now has but little time to speak peace to the conscience; it is now struggling for life, it is now fighting with angels, with infernals; all it can do now, is to cry, groan, sweat, fear, fight, and gasp for life.

I know what it is to go to God for mercy, and stand all the while through fear afar off, being possessed with this, Will not God now smite me at once to the ground for my sins? David thought something so when he said as he prayed, "Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

None know, but those that have them, what turns and returns, what coming on and going off, there are in the spirit of a man that indeed is awakened, and that stands awakened before the glorious Majesty in prayer.

It is a great matter, in praying to God, not to go too far, nor come too short; and a man is very apt to do one or the other. The Pharisee went so far, he was too bold; he came into the temple making such a ruffle with his own excellencies, there was in his thoughts no need of a Mediator.

It has been the custom of praying men to keep their distance, and not to be rudely bold in rushing into the presence of the holy and heavenly Majesty, especially if they have been sensible of their own vileness and sins, as the prodigal, the lepers, and the poor publican were. Yea, Peter himself, when upon a time he perceived more than commonly he did of the majesty of Jesus his Lord, what doth he do? "He fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

Oh, when men see God and themselves, it fills them

with holy fear of the greatness of the majesty of God, as well as with love to, and desire after, his mercy.

What is poor sorry man, poor dust and ashes, that he should crowd up, and go jostlingly into the presence of the great God?

For my part, I find it one of the hardest things that I can put my soul upon, even to come to God, when warmly sensible that I am a sinner, for a share in grace, in mercy. Oh, methinks it seems to me as if the whole face of the heavens were set against me. Yea, the very thought of God, strikes me through; I cannot bear up, I cannot stand before him; I cannot but with a thousand tears say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Ezra 9 : 15.

At another time, when my heart is more hard and stupid, and when his terror doth not make me afraid, then I can come before him and ask mercy at his hand, and scarce be sensible of sin or grace, or that indeed I am before God. But above all, they are the rare times, when I can go to God as the publican, sensible of his glorious majesty, sensible of my misery, and bear up, and affectionately cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

At certain times the most godly man in the world may be hard put to it by the sin that dwelleth in him; yea, so hard put to it, that there can be no way to save himself from a fall, but by imploring heaven and the throne of grace for help. This is called the needy-time, the time when the wayfaring man that knocked at David's door shall knock at ours; or when we are got into the sieve into which Satan did get Peter; or when those fists are about our ears that were about Paul's; and when that thorn pricks us that Paul said was in his flesh. But why, or how comes it to pass, that the godly are so hard put to it at these times, but because there is in them—that is, in their flesh—no good thing, but consequently all aptness to close

in with the devil and his suggestions, to the overthrow of the soul?

But now, here we are presented with a throne of grace, unto which, as David says, we must continually resort; and that is the way to obtain relief and to find help in time of need.

DISCOURAGEMENTS TO PRAYER REMOVED.

QUERY. What would you have a poor creature do, that cannot tell how to pray?

ANSWER. Thou canst not, thou complainest, pray; canst thou see thy misery? Hath God showed thee that thou art by nature under the curse of his law? If so, do not mistake. I know thou dost groan, and that most bitterly; I am persuaded thou canst scarcely be found doing any thing in thy calling. But prayer breaks from thy heart. Have not thy groans gone up to heaven from every corner of thy house? I know it is thus: and so also doth thine own sorrowful heart witness thy tears and thy forgetfulness of thy calling. Is not thy heart so full of desires after the things of another world, that many times thou dost even forget the things of this world? Prithee, read this scripture: Job 23: 12.

QUERY. Yea, but when I go in secret, and intend to pour out my soul before God, I can scarce say any thing at all.

ANSWER. Ah, sweet soul, it is not thy words that God so much regards, that he will not mind thee except thou comest before him with some eloquent oration. His eye is on the brokenness of thy heart; and that it is which makes the compassions of the Lord run over: "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

The stopping of thy words may arise from overmuch trouble in thy heart. David was so troubled sometimes that he could not speak. But this may comfort all such sorrowful hearts as thine, that though thou canst not

through the anguish of thy spirit speak much, yet the Holy Spirit stirs up in thy heart groans and sighs so much the more vehement.

AFFECTIONATE CONFIDENCE IN PRAYER.

God has given thee his Son's righteousness to justify thee; he has also, because thou art a son, sent forth the Spirit of his Son into thy heart to satisfy thee, and to help thee to cry unto him, Father, Father! Wilt thou not cry? wilt thou not desire? Thy God has bidden thee open thy mouth; he has bid thee open it wide, and promised, saying, "and I will fill it;" and wilt thou not desire?

Oh, thou hast a license, a leave, a grant to desire; wherefore, be not afraid to desire great mercies of the God of heaven.

Objection. "But I am an unworthy creature."

Answer. That is true; but God gives to no man for his worthiness, nor rejects any for their sinfulness, that come to him sensible of the want and worth of mercy for them. Besides, the desires of a righteous man, and the desires of his God, agree. God has a desire to thee, thou hast a desire to him. God desires truth in the inward parts, and so dost thou with all thy heart. God desires mercy, and to show it to the needy; that is what thou also wantest, and what thy soul craves at his hand.

Seek, man; ask, knock, and do not be discouraged; the Lord will grant all thy desires. Thou sayest thou art unworthy to ask the greatest things, things spiritual and heavenly: well, will carnal things serve thee, and answer the desires of thy heart? Canst thou be content to be put off with a belly well filled and a back well clothed?

"Oh, better I never had been born."

See! thou wilt not ask the best, and yet canst not make shift without them.

"Shift? no; no shift without them; I am undone without them, undone for ever and ever," sayest thou.

Well then, desire.

"So I do," sayest thou.

Ah, but desire with more strong desires; desire with more large desires; desire spiritual gifts, covet them earnestly; thou hast a license too to do so. God bids thee do so, for he hath said, "The desire of the righteous shall be granted."

GOD'S METHOD OF ANSWERING PRAYER.

"The desire of the righteous shall be granted." But I find it not so, says one; for though I have desired and desired a thousand times upon my knees, for something that I want, yet I have not my desire; and indeed, the consideration of this has made me question whether I am one of those to whom the promise of granting desires is made.

Answer. What are the things thou desirest; are they lawful or unlawful? for a Christian may desire unlawful things.

But we will suppose that the thing thou desirest is good, and that thy heart may be right in asking, as, suppose thou desirest more grace; yet there are several things for thy instruction may be applied to thy objection: as,

1. Thou, though thou desirest more of this, mayest not yet be so sensible of the worth of what thou askest, as perhaps God will have thee be before he granteth thy desire.

2. Hast thou well improved what thou hast received already?

3. When God gives to his people the grant of their desires, he doth it so as may be best for our advantage: as,

(1.) Just before a temptation comes; then if it rains grace on thee from heaven, it may be most for thy advantage. This is like God's sending plenty in Egypt just before the years of famine came.

(2.) Christians, even righteous men, are apt to lean too much to their own doings; and God, to wean them from

them, ofttimes defers to do, what they by doing expect, until in doing their spirits are spent, and they, as to doing, can do no longer. When they that cried for water, had cried till their spirits failed, and their tongue did cleave to the roof of their mouth for thirst, then the Lord did hear, and then the God of Israel did give them their desire. The righteous would be too light in asking, and would too much overprize their works, if their God should not sometimes deal in this manner with them.

(3.) It is also to the advantage of the righteous, that they be kept and led in that way which will best improve grace already received, and that is, when they spin it out and use it to the utmost; when they do with it as the prophet did with that meal's meat that he ate under the juniper-tree, "go in the strength of it forty days and forty nights, even to the mount of God." Or when they do as the widow did—spend upon their handful of flour in the barrel, and upon that little oil in the cruse, till God shall send more plenty.

A little true grace will go a great way, yea, and do more wonders than we are aware of. If we have but grace enough to keep us groaning after God, it is not all the world that can destroy us.

4. Perhaps thou mayest be mistaken. The grace thou prayest for may in a great measure be come unto thee.

Thou hast been desiring of God, thou sayest, more grace, but hast it not.

But how, if while thou lookest for it to come to thee at one door, it come to thee at another? And that we may a little inquire into the truth of this, let us a little consider what are the effects of grace in its coming to the soul, and then see if it has not been coming unto thee almost ever since thou hast set upon this fresh desire after it.

(1.) Grace, in the general effect of it, is to mend the

soul, and to make it better disposed. Hence, when it comes, it brings convincing light along with it, by which a man sees more of his baseness than at other times. If, then, thou seest thyself more vile than formerly, grace by its coming to thee has done this for thee.

(2.) Grace, when it comes, breaks and crumbles the heart in the sense and sight of its own vileness. A man stands amazed and confounded in himself; breaks and falls down on his face before God; is ashamed to lift up so much as his face to God, at the sight and apprehension of how wicked he is.

(3.) Grace, when it comes, shows to a man more of the holiness and patience of God; his holiness to make us wonder at his patience, and his patience to make us wonder at his mercy, that yet, even yet, such a vile one as I am should be admitted to breathe in the land of the living, yea more, suffered to come to the throne of grace.

(1.) Grace is of a heart-humbling nature; it will make a man account himself the most unworthy of any thing, of all saints. It will make a man put all others before him, and be glad too if he may be one beloved, though least beloved because most unworthy. It will make him with gladness accept of the lowest room, as counting all saints more worthy of exaltation than himself.

(5.) Grace will make a man prize other men's graces and gracious actions above his own; as he thinks every man's candle burns brighter than his, every man improves grace better than he, every good man does more sincerely his duty than he. And if these be not some of the effects of the renewings of grace, I will confess I have taken my mark amiss.

(6.) Renewings of grace beget renewed self-bemoanings, self-condemnations, self-abhorrences.

And say thou prayest for communion with, and the presence of God. God can have communion with thee and grant thee his presence, and all this shall, instead of

comforting thee at present, more confound thee and make thee see thy wickedness.

Some people think they never have the presence and renewings of God's grace upon them, but when they are comforted and when they are cheered up—when, alas, God may be richly with them, while they cry out by these visions, My sorrows are multiplied; or, Because I have seen God, I shall die.

And tell me now, all these things considered, has not grace, even the grace of God which thou hast so much desired, been coming to thee and working in thee in all these hidden methods? Thus therefore thy desire is accomplishing, and when it is accomplished will be sweet to thy soul.

5. But we will follow thee a little in the way of thy heart. Thou sayest thou desirest, and desirest grace, yea, hast been a thousand times upon thy knees before God for more grace, and yet thou canst not attain.

I answer, (1.) It may be, the grace which thou prayest for is worth thy being upon thy knees yet a thousand times more. We find that usually they that go to king's courts for preferment, are there at great expenses, yea, and wait a great while, even until they have spent their whole estates, and worn out their patience too.

Yet they at last prevail, and the thing desired comes; yea, and when it is come, it sets them up anew and makes them better men, though they did spend all they had to obtain it, than ever they were before. Wait, therefore, wait, I say, on the Lord; bid thy soul cheer up and wait. "Blessed are all they that wait for him."

(2.) Thou must consider that great grace is reserved for great service. Thou desirest abundance of grace; thou dost well, and thou shalt have what shall qualify thee for the service that God has for thee to do for him, and for his name in the world. The apostles themselves were to stay for great grace until the time their work was come.

I will not allot thy service, but assure thyself, when thy desire cometh, thou wilt have occasion for it—new work, new trials, new sufferings, or something that will call for the power and virtue of all the grace thou shalt have to keep thy spirit even, and thy feet from slipping, while thou art exercised in new engagements.

Assure thyself thy God will not give thee straw, but he will expect brick. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required." Wherefore, as thou art busy in desiring more grace, be also desirous that wisdom to manage it with faithfulness may also be granted unto thee.

Thou wilt say, Grace, if I had it, will do all this for me.

It will, and will not. It will, if thou watch and be sober; it will not, if thou be foolish and remiss. Men of great grace may grow consumptive in grace, and idleness may turn him that wears a plush jacket into rags. David was once a man of great grace, but his sin made the grace which he had so to shrink up and dwindle away as to make him cry out, O take not thy Spirit utterly from me!

(3.) Or, perhaps God withholds what thou wouldst have, that it may be the more prized by thee when it comes. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life."

(4.) Lastly. But dost thou think that thy more grace will exempt thee from temptations? Alas, the more grace, the greater trials. Thou must be, for all that, like the ship of which thou readest: sometimes high, sometimes low; sometimes steady, sometimes staggering; and sometimes even at the end of thy very wits: "For so he brings us to our desired haven."

Yet grace is the gold and preciousness of the righteous man: yea, and herein appears the uprightness of his soul, in that, though all these things attend the grace of God in him, yet he chooseth grace here above all, for that it

makes him the more like God and his Christ, and for that it seasons his heart best to his own content; and also for that it capacitates him to glorify God in the world.

RELIEF IN PRAYER.

If from a sense of thy vileness thou do pour out thy heart to God, desiring to be saved from the guilt and cleansed from the filth with all thy heart, fear not; thy vileness will not cause the Lord to stop his ear from hearing thee. The value of the blood of Christ, which is sprinkled upon the mercy-seat, stops the course of justice, and opens a floodgate for the mercy of the Lord to be extended unto thee.

FAITH IN PRAYER.

Of old, beggars did use to carry their bowls in their laps when they went to a door for alms; consequently, if their bowls were but little, they ofttimes came off with a loss, though the charity of the giver was large. Art thou a beggar, a beggar at God's door? be sure thou gettest a great bowl, for as thy bowl is, so will be thy mess. "According to thy faith be it unto thee."

WRESTLING PRAYER.

A wrestling spirit of prayer is a demonstration of an Israel of God; this Jacob had, this he made use of, and by this he obtained the name of Israel. A wrestling spirit of prayer in straits, difficulties, and distresses—a wrestling spirit of prayer when alone, in private, in the night, when no eye seeth but God's, then to be at it, then to lay hold of God, then to wrestle, to hold fast, and not to give over until the blessing is obtained, is a sign of one that is an Israel of God.

As this word, "*Let* Israel hope in the Lord," is sometimes equivalent to a command, so it is expressed sometimes also to show a grant, leave, or license to do a thing;

such are these that follow: "Let us come boldly to the throne of grace; let us draw near with a true heart; let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering."

Understand the word thus, and it shows you how muddy, how dark those of Israel are, and how little they are acquainted with the goodness of their God who stand shrinking at his door like beggars, and dare not in a godly sort be bold with his mercy. Wherefore standest thou thus with thy *ifs* and thy *O-buts*, O thou poor benighted Israelite? Wherefore puttest thou thy hand in thy bosom, as being afraid to touch the hem of the garment of thy Lord?

THE PUBLICAN'S PRAYER.

"God be merciful to me a sinner." Herein the publican showeth wonderful wisdom. For,

1. By this he thrusts himself under the shelter and blessing of the promise; and I am sure it is better and safer to do so than to rely upon the best excellencies that this world can afford. Hosea 14 : 1–4.

2. He takes the ready way to please God; for God takes more delight in showing mercy than in any thing that we can do. Hosea 6 : 6; Matt. 9 : 13; 12 : 7. Yea, and that also is the man that pleaseth him, even he that hopes in his mercy. Psalm 147 : 1. The publican, therefore, whatever the Pharisee might think, stood all this while upon sure ground, and had by far the start of him for heaven. Alas, his dull head could look no further than to the conceit of the pitiful beauty and splendor of his own righteousness; nor durst he leave that to trust wholly to the mercy of God. But the publican comes out, though in his sins, yet like an awakened, enlightened, resolved man; and first abases himself, then gives God the glory of his justice, and after that the glory of his mercy, by saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And thus in the ears of the angels he did ring the changes of heaven. And,

3. The publican, in his thus putting himself upon

mercy, showeth that in his opinion there is more virtue in mercy to save, than there is in the law and sin to condemn. And although this is not counted a great matter to do, while men are far from the law and while their conscience is asleep within them, yet when the law comes near and conscience is awake, whoso tries it will find it a laborious work. Cain could not do thus for his heart, no, nor soul; nor Judas neither. This is another kind of thing than most men think it to be, or shall find it whenever they shall behold God's angry face, and when they shall hear the words of his law.

However, our publican did it, and ventured his body, soul, and future condition for ever in this bottom, with other the saints and servants of God; leaving the world to swim over the sea of God's wrath, if they will, in their weak and simple vessels of bulrushes, or to lean upon their cobweb-hold, when he shall arise to the judgment that he hath appointed.

"He would not lift up his eyes to heaven." Why? Surely because shame had covered his face. Shame will make a man blush and hang his head like a bulrush. Shame for sin is a virtue, a comely thing, yea, a beauty-spot in the face of a sinner that cometh to God for mercy.

Oh, to stand, or sit, or lie, or kneel, or walk before God in prayer, with blushing cheeks for sin, is one of the excellent sights that can be seen in the world.

POSTURE IN PRAYER.

There is no stinted order presented for our behaving ourselves in prayer, whether kneeling, or standing, or walking, or lying, or sitting; for all these postures have been used by the godly. Paul kneeled down and prayed; Abraham and the publican stood and prayed; David prayed as he walked; Abraham prayed lying upon his face; Moses prayed sitting. And indeed prayer, effectual fervent

prayer, may be and often is made unto God under all these circumstances. For God has not tied us up to any of them; and he that shall tie himself or his people to any of these, doeth more than he hath warrant for from God. And let such take care of innovating; it is the next way to make men hypocrites and dissemblers in those duties in which they should be sincere. Acts 20 : 36; 2 Sam. 15 : 30, 31; Gen. 17 : 17, 18; Exod. 17 : 12.

CLOSET-INIQUITY.

Let those that name the name of Christ depart from the iniquity of their closet—when men have a closet to talk of, not to pray in; a closet to look upon, not to bow before God in; a closet to lay up gold in, but not to mourn in for the sins of the life; a closet that, could it speak, would say, My owner is seldom here upon his knees before the God of heaven, seldom here humbling himself for the iniquity of his heart, or to thank God for the mercies of his life.

Then also a man is guilty of closet-iniquity when, though he doth not utterly live in the neglect of duty, he formally, carnally, and without reverence and godly fear, performs it. Also when he asketh God for that which he cannot abide should be given him; or when he prayeth for that in his closet, that he cannot abide in his house nor his life.

It is a great thing to be a closet-Christian, and to hold it; he must be a close-Christian that will be a closet-Christian. When I say a close-Christian, I mean one that is so in the hidden part, and that also walks with God. Many there be that profess Christ, who do oftener frequent the coffee-house than their closet; and that sooner in a morning run to make bargains, than to pray unto God and begin the day with him. But for thee, who professest the name of Christ, do thou depart from all these things; do thou make conscience of reading and practising; do

thou follow after righteousness; do thou make conscience of beginning the day with God. For he that begins it not with him, will hardly end it with him; he that runs from God in the morning, will hardly find him at the close of the day; nor will he that begins with the world and the vanities thereof in the first place, be very capable of walking with God all the day after. It is he that finds God in his closet, that will carry the savor of him into his house, his shop, and his more open conversation. When Moses had been with God in the mount his face shone, he brought of that glory into the camp. Exod. 34.

FORMAL PRAYER.

"Thy kingdom come; thy will be done." Wouldst thou have the kingdom of God come indeed, and also his will to be done in earth as it is in heaven? Nay, notwithstanding thou sayest, "Thy kingdom come," yet would it not make thee ready to run mad, to hear the trumpet sound, to see the dead arise, and thyself just now to go and appear before God, to reckon for all the deeds thou hast done in the body? Nay, are not the very thoughts of it altogether displeasing to thee?

And if God's will should be done on earth as it is in heaven, must it not be thy ruin? There is never a rebel against God in heaven; and if he should so deal on earth, must he not whirl thee down to hell? And so of the rest of the petitions.

Ah, how sadly would even these men look, and with what terror would they walk up and down the world, if they did but know the lying and blaspheming that proceedeth out of their mouth, even in their most pretended sanctity!

THE PRAYERLESS.

I tell thee who never prayest, the ravens shall rise up in judgment against thee; for they will, according to their

kind, make signs and a noise for something to refresh them when they want it; but thou hast not the heart to ask for heaven, though thou must eternally perish in hell if thou hast it not.

XX. FALSE PROFESSION.

As there are trees and herbs that are wholly right and noble, fit indeed for the vineyard, so there are also their semblance, but wild; not right, but ignoble. There is the grape, and the wild grape; the vine, and the wild vine; the rose, and the canker-rose; flowers, and wild flowers; the apple, and the wild apple, which we call the crab. Now, fruit from these wild things, however they may please the children to play with, yet the prudent and grave count them of little or no value. There are also in the world a generation of professors that, notwithstanding their profession, are wild by nature; yea, such as were never cut out or off from the wild olive-tree, nor ever yet planted into the good olive-tree. Now these can bring forth nothing but wild olive-berries; they cannot bring forth fruit unto God. Such are all those that have lightly taken up a profession, and crept into the vineyard without a new birth and the blessing of regeneration.

The porch* is but the entrance of the house, whither many go that yet step not into the house, but make their retreat from thence; but it is because they are non-residents: they only come to see; or else, if they pretended more, it was not from the heart. "They went out from us," said John, "but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us;

* This passage is from "The House of the Forest of Lebanon," which Bunyan regarded as a type of the church in her persecuted state.

but they went out that it might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

And forasmuch as this porch was fifty cubits long, men may take many a step straightforward therein, and be but in the porch yet; even as we have seen men go as one would think till they are out of view, in the porch of this church in the wilderness; but presently you have them without the door again.

True, this porch was made of pillars; and so to every one, at first entrance, it seemed the power of the place. The church in the wilderness also is so builded, that men may see that it is ordained for defence. Men also, at their first offer to step over the threshold there, with mouth profess that they will dwell as soldiers there. But words are but wind: when they see the storm coming, they will take care to shift for themselves. This house or church in the wilderness must see to itself for all them.

The church also in the wilderness, even in her porch or first entrance into it, is full of pillars—apostles, prophets, and martyrs of Jesus. There also hang up the shields that the old warriors have used, and there are plastered upon the walls the brave achievements which they have done. There also are such encouragements there for those that stand, that one would think none that came thither with pretence to serve there, would for very shame attempt to go back again; and yet not to their credit be it spoken, they will forsake the place without blushing, yea, and plead for this their so doing.

There is the wilfully ignorant professor, or he that is afraid to know more for fear of the cross. He is for picking and choosing of truth, and loveth not to hazard his all for that worthy name by which he would be called. When he is at any time overset by arguments or awakenings of conscience, he uses to heal all by, "I was not brought up in this faith;" as if it were unlawful for Christians to know

more than hath been taught them at first conversion. There are many scriptures that lie against this man, as the mouths of great guns.

There is another professor; and he is for God and for Baal too: he can be any thing for any company; he can throw stones with both hands; his religion alters as fast as his company; he is a frog of Egypt, and can live in the water and out of the water; he can live in religious company, and again as well out. Nothing that is disorderly comes amiss to him; he can hold with the hare and run with the hound; he carries fire in one hand and water in the other; he is a very any thing but what he should be. This is also one of the many that "will seek to enter in, and will not be able."

Christian and Hopeful, after their headstrong manner, (said Mr. By-ends,) conclude that it is their duty to rush on their journey all weathers; and I am for waiting for wind and tide. They are for hazarding all for God at a clap; and I am for taking all advantages to secure my life and estate. They are for holding their notions, though all other men be against them; but I am for religion in what and so far as the times and my safety will bear it. They are for religion when in rags and contempt; but I am for him when he walks in golden slippers, in the sunshine, and with applause.

Then I saw in my dream that Christian and Hopeful forsook him, and kept their distance before him; but one of them looking back, saw three men following Mr. By-ends; and behold, as they came up with him he made them a very low congee, and they also gave him a compliment. The men's names were, Mr. Hold-the-world, Mr. Money-love, and Mr. Save-all, men that Mr. By-ends had formerly been acquainted with, for in their minority

they were schoolfellows, and were taught by one Mr. Gripe-man, a schoolmaster in Love-gain, which is a market-town in the county of Coveting, in the North. This schoolmaster taught them the art of getting, either by violence, cozenage, flattery, lying, or by putting on a guise of religion; and these four gentlemen had attained much of the art of their master, so that they could each of them have kept such a school themselves.

The Interpreter takes them out into his garden, and had them to a tree whose inside was all rotten and gone, and yet it grew and had leaves. Then said Mercy, "What means this?" "This tree," said he, "whose outside is fair and whose inside is rotten, is it which may be compared to them that are in the garden of God, who with their mouths speak high in behalf of God, but in deed will do nothing for him; whose leaves are fair, but their heart good for nothing but to be tinder for the devil's tinder-box."

This is the reason of that evil-favoredness that you see attending some men's lives and professions; they have been corrupted, as Adam was, either by evil words or bad examples, even till the very face of their lives and professions are disfigured as with the pox or canker.

As the bramble said to the rest of the trees, so saith Christ to feigned thanksgivers, who pretend to give thanks for liberty, but rather use their liberty as an occasion for the flesh: If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust under my shadow; submit to my law, and be governed by my testament.

HYPOCRISY.

Hypocrisy is one of the most abominable of iniquities. It is a sin that dares it with God. It is a sin that saith God is ignorant, or that he delighteth in iniquity. It is a

sin that flattereth, that dissembleth, that offereth to hold God, as it were, fair in hand, about that which is neither purposed nor intended. It is also a sin that puts a man upon studying and contriving to beguile and deceive his neighbor as to the bent and intent of the heart, and also as to the cause and end of actions. It is a sin that persuadeth a man to make a show of civility, morality, or religion, as a cloak, a pretence, a guise to deceive withal. It will make a man preach for a place and praise, rather than to glorify God and save souls; it will put a man upon talking, that he may be commended; it will make a man, when he is at prayer in his closet, strive to be heard without door; it will make a man ask for that he desireth not, and show zeal in duties when his heart is as cold, as senseless, and as much without savor as a clod; it will make a man pray to be seen and heard of men, rather than to be heard of God; it will make a man strive to weep when he repenteth not, and to pretend much friendship when he doth not love; it will make a man pretend to experience and sanctification when he has none, and to faith and sincerity when he knows not what they are. There is opposed to this sin, simplicity, innocence, and godly sincerity, without which three graces thou wilt be a hypocrite. Believe that a hypocrite, with the cunning and shrouds for his hypocrisy, can go unseen no further than the grave; nor can he longer flatter himself with thoughts of life.

A hypocrite and a false professor may go a great way; they may pass through the first and second watch, to wit, may be approved by Christians and churches; but what will they do when they come at the iron gate that leadeth into the city?

As Luther says, "In the name of God" begins all mischief. For hypocrites have no other way to bring their

evils to maturity, but by using and mixing the name of God and religion therewith. Thus they become whited walls; for by this white, the white of religion, the dirt of their actions is hid.

Religion to most men is but a by-business, with which they use to fill up spare hours; or as a stalking-horse, which is used to catch the game.

The Pharisees did carry the bell and wear the garland for religion.

A fawning dog and a wolf in sheep's clothing; they differ a little in outward appearance, but they can both agree to worry Christ's lambs.

CHRIST'S LOVE ABUSED.

Take heed of abusing this love of Christ, Eph. 3 : 18, 19 This exhortation seems needless; for love is such a thing as one would think none could find in their hearts to abuse. But for all that, I am of opinion that there is nothing that is more abused among professors at this day, than is this love of God. And what can such a one say for himself in the judgment, that shall be charged with the abuse of love? Christians, deny yourselves, deny your lusts, deny the vanities of this present life, devote yourselves to God, become lovers of God, lovers of his ways, and a people zealous of good works; then shall you show to one another and to all men that you have not received the grace of God in vain. And what a thing will it be to be turned off at last, as one that abused the love of Christ; as one that presumed upon his lusts, this world, and all manner of naughtiness, because the love of Christ to pardon sins was so great! What an unthinking, what a disingenuous one wilt thou be counted at that day; yea, thou wilt be found to be the man that made a prey of love, that made a stalk-

ing-horse of love, that made of love a slave to sin, the devil, and the world; and will not that be bad?

Objection. If it be so, then men need not care what they do; they may live in sin, seeing Christ hath made satisfaction.

Answer. If I were to point out one under the power of the devil, going hastily to hell, I would look no further for such a man than to him that would make such a use as this of the grace of God. What, because Christ is a Saviour, thou wilt be a sinner; because his grace abounds, therefore thou wilt abound in sin! O wicked wretch, let me tell thee before I leave thee, as God's covenant with Christ for his children stands sure, immutable, and unchangeable, so also hath God taken such a course with thee, that unless he deny himself, it is impossible that thou shouldst go to heaven, dying in that condition. They tempted God, proved him, and turned his grace into lasciviousness; so he sware in his wrath, They shall not enter into my rest. No, saith God, if Christ and heaven will not satisfy them, hell must devour them. God hath more places than one in which to put sinners: if they do not like heaven, hell must be their residence; if they do not love Christ, they must dwell for ever with devils.

PERVERSION OF THE TRUTH.

Let those that name the name of Christ depart from the iniquity that cleaveth to opinions. This is a sad age for that: let opinions in themselves be never so good, never so necessary, never so innocent, yet there are spirits in the world that will entail iniquity to them, and will make the vanity so inseparable from the opinion, that it is almost impossible with some to take in the opinion and leave out the iniquity that by craft and subtlety of Satan is joined thereto. Nor is this a thing new and of yesterday; it has been thus almost in all ages of the church of God, and

that not only in things small and indifferent, but in things fundamental and most substantial. I need instance in none other for proof hereof, but the doctrine of faith and holiness. If faith be preached as that which is absolutely necessary to justification, then faith fantastical, and looseness and remissness in life, with some, are joined therewith. If holiness of life be preached as necessary to salvation, then faith is undervalued and set below its place, and works, as to justification with God, set up and made copartners with Christ's merits in the remission of sins. Thus iniquity joineth itself with the greatest and most substantial truths of the gospel; and it is hard to receive any good opinion whatever, but iniquity will join itself thereto.

A LATITUDINARIAN.

What you say about doubtful opinions, alterable modes, rites, and circumstances in religion, I know none so wedded thereto as yourselves. For you thus argue: "Whatsoever of such are commended by the custom of the place we live in, or commanded by superiors, or made by any circumstance convenient to be done, our Christian liberty consists in this—that we have leave to do them."

So that, do but call them things indifferent, things that are the customs of the place we live in, or made by any circumstance convenient, and a man may not doubt but he hath leave to do them, let him live at Rome or Constantinople, or amidst the greatest corruption of worship and government. There are therefore, doubtless, a third sort of fundamentals, by which you can wrestle with conviction of conscience, and stifle it—by which you can suit yourself for every fashion, mode, and way of religion. Here you may hop from Presbyterianism to a prelatical mode; and if time and chance should serve you, backwards and forwards again: yea, here you can make use of several consciences, one for this way now, another for that anon; now putting out the light of this by a sophistical, delusive argument

then putting out the other by an argument that best suits the time. Yea, how oft is the candle of the wicked put out by such glorious learning as this. Nay, I doubt not but a man of your principles, were he put upon it, would not stick to count those you call gospel-positive precepts,*

* "Latitudinarian." This term is used of a "remarkable class of divines," who flourished in England about the middle and towards the close of the seventeenth century. Coleridge, in his Literary Remains, says that they were generally Platonists, and all of them admirers of Grotius. "They fell into the mistake of finding in the Greek philosophy many anticipations of the Christian faith, which in fact were but its echoes. The inference is as perilous as inevitable, namely, that even the mysteries of Christianity needed no revelation, having been previously discovered and set forth by unaided reason." They are thus characterized by Dr. Wm. R. Williams, ("Miscellanies," p. 196:) "Against infidelity and popery they did good service in the cause of truth. Their dread of enthusiasm made them frigid, and their mastery of the ancient philosophy made them profound. Their doctrines were generally Arminian. Their notions of church power were less rigid than those of the rival party, and they were also more tolerant of difference in opinion. But in their preaching they laid the whole stress, well-nigh, of their efforts upon morals, to the neglect of doctrine; and in their theology, they attributed to human reason a strength and authority which gradually opened the way to the invasion of the gravest heresies. Of generally purer character than their opponents, they were also abler preachers. But while valuable as moral treatises, their sermons were most defective; for the peculiar doctrines and spirit of the gospel were evaporated." It cannot be doubted, that a class which included such men as Henry More, Cudworth, Tillotson, and Burnet, hardly deserves the wholesale reprobation hurled upon it by Bunyan. That some of them carried their *liberalism* to a dangerous extreme, and that all of them allowed too great latitude of sentiment in theology, and, by their philosophical speculations, obscured the simple glory of the gospel, is indeed true; but some who bore this name were men of unquestionable piety, as well as of eminent genius and scholarship.

It is interesting to contrast the mixture of divine truth and human speculation, and the almost melancholy doubts, exhibited in the writings of so excellent a man as Cudworth, with the strong and certain convictions, and the clear, well-defined views of Christian doctrine of John Bunyan, connected as they were in his case with the almost exclusive study of the word of God. We learn thereby not to despise learning and philosophy, but to beware of lowering the authority and

of no value at all in the Christian religion; for now, even now, you do not stick to say that even the duty of going to God by Christ is one of these, and such a one as, if absolutely considered in itself, is neither good nor evil.

How, then, if God should cast you into Turkey, where Mahomet reigns as lord? it is but reckoning that it is the religion and custom of the country, and that which is authorized by the power that is there; wherefore, it is but sticking to your dictates of human nature, and remembering that coming to God by Christ is a thing of an indifferent nature in itself, and then for peace' sake and to sleep in a whole skin, you may comply and do as your superior commands. Why? because in Turkey are your first sort of fundamentals all found; there are men that have human nature and the law of morals written in their hearts; they have also the dictates thereof written within them, which teach them those you call the eternal laws of righteousness: wherefore you both would agree in your essential and immutable differences of good and evil, and differ only about these positive laws—indifferent things. Yea, and Mahomet also for the time, because by a custom it is made convenient, might be now accounted worshipful; and the circumstances that attend his worship, especially those of them that clash not with the dictates of your human nature, might also be swallowed down.

Behold you here then, good reader, a glorious Latitudinarian, that can, as to religion, turn and twist like an eel on the hook; or rather like the weathercock that stands on the steeple.

CHANGING SINS.

Dost thou profess the name of Christ, and dost thou pretend to be a man departing from iniquity? Then take

sufficiency of divine revelation before human reason and speculation, and to acknowledge with humble gratitude the rich rewards of an earnest and prayerful study of the English Scriptures.

heed thou dost not deceive thyself, by changing one bad way of sinning for another bad way of sinning. This was a trick that Israel played of old; for when God's prophets followed them hard with demands of repentance and reformation, then they would "gad about to change their ways." Jer. 2:36. But behold, they would not change a bad way for a good, but one bad way for another; hopping as the squirrel from bough to bough, but not willing to forsake the tree. Many times men change their darling sins, as some change their servants; that which would serve for such a one this year, may not serve for the year ensuing. Hypocrisy would do awhile ago, but now debauchery. Profaneness would do when profaneness was in fashion, but now a deceitful profession. Take heed, professor, that thou dost not throw away thy old darling sin for a new one. Men's tempers alter. Youth is for pride and wantonness; middle age for cunning and craft; old age for the world and covetousness. Take heed, therefore, of deceit in this thing.

Dost thou profess the name of Christ, and dost thou pretend to be a man departing from iniquity? take heed lest thy departing from iniquity should be but for a time. Some do depart from iniquity, as persons in wrangling fits depart from one another, to wit, for a time; but when the quarrel is over, by means of some intercessor they are reconciled again. Oh, Satan is the intercessor between the soul and sin; and though the breach between these two may seem to be irreconcilable, yea, though the soul has sworn it will never more give countenance to so vile a thing as sin is, yet he can tell how to make up this difference, and to fetch them back to their vomit again, who, one would have thought, had quite escaped his sins and been gone. 2 Pet. 2:18–22. Take heed, therefore, O professor, for there is danger of this, and the height of danger lies in it; and I think that Satan, to do this thing, makes use of those sins again to begin this rejoinder, which he findeth most suitable to the temper and constitution of the

sinner. These are, as I may call them, the master-sins; they suit, they agree with the temper of the soul. These, as the little end of the wedge, enter with ease, and so make way for those that come after, with which Satan knows he can rend the soul in pieces. Wherefore,

To help this, take heed of parleying with thy sins again, when once thou hast departed from them: sin has a smooth tongue; if thou hearken to its enchanting language, ten thousand to one but thou art entangled. Take heed, therefore, of listening to the charms wherewith sin enchanteth the soul. In this, be like the deaf adder; stop thine ear, plug it up to sin, and let it only be open to hear the words of God.

THE UNHOLY PROFESSOR.

A professor that hath not forsaken his iniquity, is like one that comes out of the pest-house, among the whole, with his plague-sores running upon him. This is the man that hath the breath of a dragon; he poisons the air round about him. This is the man that slays his children, his kinsmen, his friend, and himself. What shall I say? A man that nameth the name of Christ, and that departeth not from iniquity, to whom may he be compared? The Pharisees, for that they professed religion but walked not answerably thereto, unto what doth Christ compare them but to serpents and vipers; what does he call them but hypocrites, whited walls, painted sepulchres, fools, and blind, and tells them that they made men more the children of hell than they were before? Matt. 23. Wherefore, such a one cannot go out of the world by himself; for as he gave occasion of scandal when he was in the world, so is he the cause of the damnation of many. The apostle did use to weep when he spake of these professors, such an offence he knew they were and would be in the world. Acts 20 : 30; Phil. 3 : 18, 19.

These are the chief of the engines of Satan; with these

he worketh wonders. One Balaam, one Jeroboam, one Ahab, O how many fish such bring to Satan's net. These are the tares that he strives to sow among the wheat, for he knows they are mischief to it. "Wherefore let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

Those that religiously name the name of Christ and do not depart from iniquity, how will they die; and how will they look that Man in the face, unto the profession of whose name they have entailed an unrighteous conversation; or do they think that he doth not know what they have done, or that they may take him off with a few cries and wringing of hands, when he is on the throne to do judgment against transgressors. O, it had been better they had not known, had not professed; yea, better they had never been born. And as Christ says it had been good, so Peter says it had been better, Mark 14 : 12; 14 : 22; 2 Pet. 2 : 20, 21—good they had not been born, and better they had not known and made profession of the name of Christ.

We read that the tail of the dragon, or that the dragon by his tail, did draw and cast down abundance of the stars of heaven to the earth. Rev. 12 : 4; Isa. 9 : 14, 15. The prophet that speaketh lies either by opinion or practice, he is the tail, the dragon's tail, the serpentine tail of the devil. Isa. 9 : 14, 15. And so in his order, every professor that by his iniquity draweth both himself and others down to hell, he is the tail. Nor can Satan work such exploits by any, as he can by unrighteous professors. These he useth in his hand as the giant useth his club; he, as it were, drives all before him with it. It is said of Behemoth, that "he moveth his tail like a cedar." Job 40 : 17. Behemoth is a type of the devil; but behold how he handleth his tail, even as if a man should swing about a cedar. This is spoken to show the hurtfulness of the tail, as it is also said in another place, Rev. 9 : 5, 10, 19. Bet-

ter no professor than a wicked professor; better openly profane, than a hypocritical namer of the name of Christ; and less hurt shall such a one do to his own soul, to the poor ignorant world, to the name of Christ, and to the church of God.

There is the sin of professors; there is a profession that will stand with an unsanctified heart and life. The sin of such will overpoise the salvation of their souls, the sin-end being the heaviest end of the scale: I say, that being the heaviest end which hath sin in it, they tilt over, and so are, notwithstanding their glorious profession, drowned in perdition and destruction.

The iniquity that cleaveth to men that profess, if they cast it not away, but countenance it, will all prove nettles and briars to them; and I will assure thee, yea, thou knowest, that nettles and thorns will sting and scratch but ill favoredly. "I went," saith Solomon, "by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down." Prov. 24:30, 31.

Suppose a man were, after work all day, to be turned into a bed of nettles at night; or, after a man had been about such a business, should be rewarded with chastisements of briars and thorns; this reward for work would be but little help, relief, or comfort to him. But this is the reward of a wicked man, of a wicked professor from God: nettles and thorns are to cover over the face of his vineyard, his field, his profession, and that at the last of all; for this covering over the face of his vineyard with nettles and thorns, is to show what fruit the slovenly, slothful, careless professor will reap out of his profession when reaping-time shall come.

Nor can he whose vineyard, whose profession is covered

over with those nettles and thorns of iniquity, escape being affected with them in his conscience; for, as they cover the face of his vineyard through his sloth now, so will they cover the face of his conscience in the day of judgment. For profession and conscience cannot be separated long: if a man then shall make profession without conscience of God's honor in his conversation, his profession and conscience will meet in the day of his visitation. Nor will he whose condition this shall be, be able to ward off the guilt and sting of a slothful and bad conversation from covering the face of his conscience, by retaining in his profession the name of Jesus Christ: for naming and professing the name of Christ will, instead of salving such a conscience, put venom, sting, and keenness into those nettles and thorns that then shall be spread over the face of such consciences. I beseech you, consider this, namely, that the man that professeth the name of Christ and yet liveth a wicked life, is the greatest enemy that God has in the world, and consequently one that God will most eminently set his face against.

THE FRUITLESS PROFESSOR.

Barren-fig-tree, thou art not licensed by thy profession, nor by the Lord of the vineyard, to bear these clusters of Gomorrah: neither shall the vineyard, nor thy being crowded among the trees there, shelter thee from the sight of the eye of God. Many make religion their cloak and Christ their stalking-horse, and by that means cover themselves and hide their own wickedness from men: but God seeth their hearts, hath his print upon the heels of their feet, and ponderoth all their goings: and at last, when their iniquity is found to be hateful, he will either smite them with hardness of heart and so leave them, or awaken them to bring forth fruit. Fruit he looks for, seeks, and expects, O thou barren fig-tree.

But what, come into the presence of God to sin!

What, come into the presence of God to hide thy sin! Alas, man, the church is God's garden, and Christ Jesus is the great Apostle and High-priest of our profession. What, come into the house that is called by his name, into the place where his honor dwelleth, where his eyes and heart are continually—what, come there to sin, to hide thy sin, to cloak thy sin! His plants are an orchard with pleasant fruits; and every time he goeth into his garden, it is "to see the fruits of the valley," and to see if the vines flourish and if the pomegranates bud.

Yea, he came seeking fruit on this fig-tree. The church is the place of God's delight, where he ever desires to be; there he is night and day. He is there to seek for fruit, to seek for fruit of all and every tree in the garden. Wherefore assure thyself, O fruitless one, that thy ways must needs be open before the eyes of the Lord. One black sheep is soon espied, although in company with many; it is taken with the first cast of the eye; its different color still betrays it. I say, therefore, a church and a profession are not places where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves from God, that seeks for fruit: "My vineyard," saith God, "which is mine, is before me." Song 8:12; Psa. 26:8; 1 Kings, 9:3; Song 4: 13–15.

Barren soul, how many showers of grace, how many dews from heaven, hast thou enjoyed! How many times have the silver streams of the city of God run gliding by thy roots, to cause thee to bring forth fruit! These showers and streams, and the drops that hang upon thy boughs, will all be accounted for; and will they not testify against thee, that thou oughtest of right to be burned? Hear and tremble, O thou barren professor!

When a man seeks for fruit on a tree, he goes round it and round it, now looking into this bough and then into that; he peeps into the inmost boughs and the lowermost

boughs, if perhaps fruit may be thereon. Barren fig-tree, God will look into all thy boughs.

There is a man that hath a hundred trees in his vineyard, and at the time of the season he walketh into his vineyard to see how the trees flourish; and as he goes and views and pries and observes how they are hung with fruit, behold, he cometh to one where he findeth naught but leaves. Now he makes a stand, looks upon it again and again; he looks also here and there, above and below; and if, after all this seeking, he finds nothing but leaves thereon, then he begins to cast in his mind how he may know this tree next year, what stands next it, or how far it is off the hedge; but if there be nothing there that may be as a mark to know it by, then he takes his hook and giveth it a private mark, saying, Go thy way, fruitless fig-tree, thou hast spent this season in vain.

Yet doth he not cut it down—"I will try it another year; may be this was not a hitting season." Therefore he comes again next year to see if now it have fruit; but as he found it before, so he finds it now, barren, barren, every year barren; he looks again, but finds no fruit. Now he begins to have second thoughts. How, neither hit last year nor this! Surely the barrenness is not in the season, sure the fault is in the tree; however, I will spare it this year also, but will give it a second mark; and, it may be, he toucheth it with a hot iron, because he begins to be angry.

Well, at the third season he comes again for fruit, but the third year is like the first and second, no fruit yet; it only cumbereth the ground. What now must be done with this fig-tree? Why, the Lord will lop its boughs with terror—yea, the thickets of those professors with iron. I have waited, saith God, these three years; I have missed of fruit these three years; it hath been a cumber-ground these three years; cut it down. Precept hath been upon pre-

cept, and line upon line, one year after another, for these three years, but no fruit can be seen; I find none: fetch out the axe.

"Lord, let it alone this year also." Here is astonishing grace indeed; astonishing grace, that the Lord Jesus should concern himself with a barren fig-tree; that he should step in to stop the blow from a barren fig-tree! True, he stopped the blow but for a time; but why did he stop it at all? Why did he not fetch out the axe? Why did he not do execution? Why did he not cut it down?

Barren fig-tree, it is well for thee that there is a Jesus at God's right hand, a Jesus of that largeness of pity to have compassion for a barren fig-tree; else justice had never let thee alone to cumber the ground, as thou hast done.

See the care, the love, the labor, and way which the Lord Jesus, the dresser of the vineyard, is fain to take with thee, if haply thou mayest be made fruitful.

"Lord, let it alone this year." Lord, a little longer; let us not lose a soul for want of means. I will try, I will see if I can make it fruitful; I will not beg a long life, nor that it might still be barren, and so provoke thee. I beg for the sake of the soul, the immortal soul; Lord, spare it one year only, one year longer, this year also; if I do any good to it, it will be in little time. Thou shalt not be overwearied with waiting; one year and then—

Barren fig-tree, dost thou hear what a striving there is between the vinedresser and the husbandman for thy life?

"Cut it down," says one; "Lord, spare it," says the other. "It is a cumber-ground," saith the Father; "One year longer," prays the Son: "let it alone this year also."

"Till I shall dig about it and dung it." I doubt if it is not too much ground-bound. "The love of this world and

the deceitfulness of riches" lie too close to the roots of the heart of this professor. The love of riches, the love of honors, the love of pleasures, are the thorns that choke the word; how then can there be fruit brought forth to God?

Barren fig-tree, see how the Lord Jesus by these words suggests the cause of thy fruitlessness of soul. The things of this world lie too close to thy heart; the earth and its things have bound up thy roots; thou art an earth-bound soul, thou art wrapped up in thick clay. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;" how then can he be fruitful in the vineyard?

This kept Judas from the fruit of caring for the poor. This kept Demas from the fruit of self-denial. And this kept Ananias and Sapphira his wife from the goodly fruit of sincerity and truth. 1 John, 2:15, 16; John 12:6; 2 Tim. 4:10; Acts 5:5–10; 1 Tim. 6:9, 10.

"And if it bear fruit, well." And if the outlay of all my labor doth make this fig-tree fruitful, I shall count my time, my labor, and means, well bestowed upon it; and thou also, O my God, shalt be therewith much delighted; for thou art gracious and merciful, and repentest thee of the evil which thou threatenest to bring upon a people.

These words therefore inform us, that if a barren fig-tree, a barren professor, shall now at last bring forth fruit to God, it shall go well with that professor, it shall go well with that poor soul. His former barrenness, his former tempting of God, his abuse of God's patience and long-suffering, his misspending year after year, shall now be all forgiven him. Yea, God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ will now pass by and forget all, and say, "Well done," at the last.

"And if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." There is nothing more exasperating to the mind of a man,

than to find all his kindness and favor slighted; neither is the Lord Jesus so provoked with any thing, as when sinners abuse his means of grace. If it be barren and fruitless under my gospel, if it turn my grace into wantonness, if, after digging and dunging and waiting, it yet remain unfruitful, I will let thee cut it down.

Gospel-means applied are the last remedy for a barren professor; if the gospel, if the grace of the gospel will not do, there can be nothing expected but, "Cut it down."

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Matt. 23:37, 38.

Yet it cannot be but that this Lord Jesus, who at first did put a stop to the execution of his Father's justice, because he desired to try more means with the fig-tree—it cannot be but that a heart so full of compassion as his, should be touched to behold this professor must now be cut down. "And when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

When Christ giveth thee over, there is no intercessor no mediator, no more sacrifice for sin; all is gone but judgment, but the axe, but "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Heb. 10:26–28.

The day of grace ends with some men before God takes them out of this world. Now, then, I would show you by some signs how you may know that the day of grace is ended, or near to ending with the barren professor.

First sign. The day of grace is like to be past, when a professor hath *withstood, abused, and worn out God's pa-*

tience: then he is in danger; this is a provocation; now God cries, "Cut it down."

There are some men that steal into a profession, nobody knows how, even as this fig-tree was brought into the vineyard by other hands than God's; and there they abide lifeless, graceless, careless, and without any good conscience to God at all. Perhaps they came in for the loaves, for a trade, for credit, for a blind; or it may be, to stifle and choke the checks and grinding pangs of an awakened and disquieted conscience. Now, having obtained their purpose, like the sinners of Zion, they are at ease and secure, saying, like Agag, Surely the bitterness of death is past: I am well; I shall be saved and go to heaven. Thus in these vain conceits they spend a year, two, or three; not remembering that at every season of grace, and at every opportunity of the gospel, the Lord comes seeking fruit.

Well, sinner, well, barren fig-tree, this is but an evil beginning. God comes for fruit. What have I here? saith God. What a fig-tree is this, that hath stood this year in my vineyard, and brought me forth no fruit! I will cry unto him, Professor, barren fig-tree, be fruitful; I look for fruit, I expect fruit, I must have fruit; therefore bethink thyself. At these the professor pauses; but these are words, not blows; therefore off goes this consideration from the heart.

When God comes the next year, he finds him still as he was, a barren, fruitless cumber-ground. And now again he complains, Here are two years gone, and no fruit appears; well, I will defer mine anger for my name's sake. I will yet wait to be gracious. But this helps not, this hath not the least influence upon the barren fig-tree: Tush, saith he, here is no threatening; God is merciful, he will defer his anger, he waits to be gracious; I am not yet afraid. O, how ungodly men, that are unawares crept into the vineyard, how do they turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness!

Well, he comes the third year for fruit, as he did before, but still he finds but a barren fig-tree; no fruit. Now he cries out again, O thou dresser of my vineyard, come hither: here is a fig-tree hath stood these three years in my vineyard, and hath at every season disappointed my expectation; for I have looked for fruit in vain. Cut it down; my patience is worn out, I shall wait on this fig-tree no longer.

And now he begins to shake the fig-tree with his threatenings: Fetch out the axe. Now the axe is death; death therefore is called for. Death, come, smite me this fig-tree. And withal the Lord shakes this sinner, and whirls him upon a sick-bed, saying, Take him, death; he hath abused my patience and forbearance, not remembering that it should have led him to repentance and to the fruits thereof: death, fetch away this fig-tree to the fire, fetch this barren professor to hell. At this, death comes with grim looks into the chamber, yea, and hell follows with him to the bedside, and both stare this professor in the face, yea, begin to lay hands upon him. One smites him with pains in his body, with headache, heartache, backache, shortness of breath, fainting qualms, trembling of joints, stopping at the chest, and almost all the symptoms of a man past all recovery. Now, while death is thus tormenting the body, hell is busy with the mind and conscience, striking them with its pains, casting sparks of fire in thither, wounding with sorrows and fears of everlasting damnation the spirit of this poor creature. And now he begins to bethink himself, and to cry to God for mercy: Lord, spare me; Lord, spare me. Nay, saith God, you have been a provocation to me these three years. How many times have you disappointed me! How many seasons have you spent in vain! How many sermons and other mercies did I of my patience afford you; but to no purpose at all. Take him, death. O good Lord, saith the sinner, spare me but this once; raise me but this once.

Indeed I have been a barren professor, and have stood to no purpose at all in thy vineyard; but spare, O spare me this one time, I beseech thee, and I will be better. Away, away, you will not; I have tried you these three years already; you are naught: if I should recover you again, you would be as bad as you were before. (And all this talk is while death stands by.) The sinner cries again, Good Lord, try me this once; let me get up again this once, and see if I do not mend. But will you promise me to mend? Yes indeed, Lord, and vow it too. I will never be so bad again, I will be better. Well, saith God, Death, let this professor alone for this time: I will try him a little longer; he hath promised, he hath vowed, that he will amend his ways. It may be he will mind to keep his promises. Vows are solemn things; it may be he may fear to break his vows. Arise from off thy bed. And now God lays down his axe. At this the poor creature is very thankful, praises God, and fawns upon him, shows as if he did it heartily, and calls to others to thank him too. He therefore riseth, as one would think, to be a new creature indeed. But by that he hath put on his clothes, is come down from his bed, and ventured into the yard or shop, and there sees how all things are gone to sixes and sevens, he begins to have second thoughts, and says to his folks, What have you all been doing? How are all things out of order! I am I cannot tell how much behindhand; one may see if a man be but a little laid aside, that you have neither wisdom nor prudence to order things. And now, instead of seeking to spend the rest of his time for God, he doubleth his diligence after this world. Alas, he saith, all must not be lost; we must have provident care. And thus, quite forgetting the sorrows of death, the pains of hell, the promises and vows which he made to God to be better, because judgment was not speedily executed, therefore the heart of this poor creature is fully set in him to do evil.

These things proving ineffectual, God takes hold of his

axe again, sends death to a wife, to a child, to his cattle. I will blast him, cross him, disappoint him, cast him down; and will set myself against him in all that he putteth his hand unto. At this the poor barren professor cries out again, Lord, I have sinned; spare me once more, I beseech thee. O take not away the desire of mine eyes; spare my children, bless me in my labors, and I will mend and be better. No, saith God, you lied to me last time, I will trust you in this no longer; and withal he tumbleth the wife, the child, the estate, into a grave.

At this the poor creature is afflicted and distressed, rends his clothes, and begins to call the breaking of his promise and vows to mind; he mourns and prays, and like Ahab, a while walks softly at the remembrance of the justness of the hand of God upon him. And now he renews his promises: Lord, try me this one time more, take off thy hand and see; they go far that never turn. Well, God spareth him again, sets down his axe again: "Many times he did deliver them, but they provoked him with their counsels, and were brought low for their iniquities." Now they seem to be thankful again, and are as if they resolved to be godly indeed. Now they read, they pray, they go to meetings, and seem to be serious for a while; but at last they forget. Their lusts prick them, suitable temptations present themselves; wherefore, they return to their own crooked ways again.

Yet again, the Lord will not leave this barren professor, Luke 13: 6–9, but will take up his axe again, and will put him under a more heart-searching ministry, a ministry that shall search him and turn him over and over—a ministry that shall meet with him, as Elijah met with Ahab, in all his acts of wickedness: and now the axe is laid to the roots of the tree. Besides, this ministry doth not only search the heart, but presenteth the sinner with the golden rays of the glorious gospel: now is Christ Jesus set forth evidently, now is grace displayed sweetly; now, now are the

promises broken, like boxes of ointment, to the perfuming of the whole room. But alas, there is yet no fruit on this fig-tree. While his heart is searched, he wrangles; while the glorious grace of the gospel is unveiled, this professor wags and is wanton, gathers up some scraps thereof, tastes the good word of God and the power of the world to come, drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon him, but bringeth not forth fruit meet for him whose gospel it is; takes no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart, but counteth that the glory of the gospel consisteth in talk and show, and that our obedience thereto is a matter of speculation—that good works lie in good words, and if men can finely talk, they may think they bravely please God. He thinks the kingdom of God consisteth only in word, not in power; and thus proves ineffectual this fourth means also.

Well, now the axe begins to be heaved higher, for now indeed God is ready to smite the sinner: yet before he will strike the stroke, he will try one way more at last; and if that misseth, down goes the fig-tree.

Now this last way is to labor and strive with this professor by his Spirit. Therefore the Spirit of the Lord is now come to him; but not always to strive with man, Gen. 6 : 8; yet awhile he will strive with him, he will awaken, he will convince, he will call to remembrance former sins, former judgments, the breach of former vows and promises, the misspending of former days. He will also present persuasive arguments, encouraging promises, dreadful judgments, the shortness of time to repent in; and that there is hope if he come. He will show him the certainty of death and of the judgment to come, yea, he will pull and strive with this sinner. But behold, the mischief now lies here; here is laboring and striving on both sides. The Spirit convinces, the man turns a deaf ear to God; the Spirit saith, Receive my instruction and live, but the man pulls away his shoulder; the Spirit shows him whither he

is going, but the man closeth his eyes against it; the Spirit offers violence, the man strives and resists: he has "done despite unto the Spirit of grace." Heb. 10:29. The Spirit parleyeth a second time and urgeth reasons of a new nature, but the sinner answereth, No; I have loved strangers, and after them will I go. Amos 4:6–12. At this, God comes out of his holy-place, and is terrible; now he sweareth in his wrath they shall never enter into his rest. Ezek. 34:13. I exercised towards you my patience, yet you have not turned unto me, saith the Lord: I smote you in your person, in your relations, in your estate, yet you have not returned unto me, saith the Lord. "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?"

The second sign that such a professor is almost, if not quite past grace, is when God hath *given him over*, or lets him alone and suffers him to do any thing, and that without control; helpeth him not either in works of holiness, or in straits and difficulties: "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." "Woe be to them when I depart from them." "I will laugh at their calamity; I will mock when their fear cometh."

Barren fig-tree, thou hast heretofore been digged about; God's mattock has heretofore been at thy roots; thou hast heretofore been striven with, convinced, awakened, made to taste and see, and cry, O the blessedness! Thou hast heretofore been met with under the word; thy heart has melted, thy spirit has fallen, thy soul has trembled, and thou hast felt something of the power of the gospel. But thou hast sinned; thou hast provoked the eyes of his glory, thy iniquity is found to be hateful; and now perhaps God has left thee, given thee up, and lets thee alone.

Heretofore thou wast tender; thy conscience startled at the temptation to wickedness, for thou wert taken off from the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 2:20–22; but

that very vomit that once thou wert turned from, now thou lappest up again.

Seest thou a man that heretofore had the knowledge of God, and that had some awe of majesty upon him; seest thou such a one sporting himself in his own deceivings, Rom. 1 : 30, 31, "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and walking after his own ungodly lusts? His judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and his damnation slumbereth not." 2 Pet. 2 : 13.

Dost thou hear, barren professor? It is astonishing to see how those who once seemed sons of the morning, and were making preparations for eternal life, now at last, for the rottenness of their hearts, by the just judgment of God are permitted, being past feeling, "to give themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Eph 4 : 18, 19. A great number of such were in the first gospel days; against whom Peter and Jude and John pronounce the just judgment of God. 2 Pet. 2 : 3–8; Jude 5–8. Barren fig-tree, dost thou hear? These are beyond all mercy; these are beyond all promises; these are beyond all hopes of repentance; these have no intercessor, nor any more share in the one sacrifice for sin. For these there remains nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment.

These men go whither they will, do what they will; they may range from opinion to opinion, from notion to notion, from sect to sect, but are steadfast nowhere: they are left to their own uncertainties; they have not grace to establish their hearts; and though some of them have boasted themselves of this liberty, yet Jude calls them wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. They are left to be fugitives and vagabonds in the earth, to wander everywhere but to abide nowhere, until they shall descend to their own place, with Cain and Judas, men of the same fate with themselves.

Look thou certainly, fruitless professor, for an eternal

disappointment in the day of God; for it must be; thy lamp will be out at the first sound the trump of God shall make in thine ears; thou canst not hold up at the appearance of the Son of God in his glory; his very looks will be to thy profession as a strong wind is to a blinking candle, and thou shalt be left only to smoke.

Oh, the alteration that will befall a foolish virgin. She thought she was happy, and that she should have received happiness with those that were right at the heart; but behold the contrary: her lamp is going out, she has now to seek for saving grace, when the time of grace is over; her heaven she thought of has proved a hell, and her god has proved a devil. God hath cast her out of his presence, and closes the door upon her. She pleads her profession and the like, and she hath for her answer repulses from heaven. "So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish; whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be the spider's web: though he lean upon his house, it shall not stand; he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure."

Take heed, therefore; thy soul, heaven, and eternity lie at stake; yea, they turn either to thee or from thee upon the hinge of thy faith, If it be right, all is thine; if wrong, then all is lost, however thy hope and expectations are to the contrary.

There are bare notions, there are common workings, and there is a work that is saving and that will do the soul good to eternity.

1. There are bare notions, and they that have them are such unto whom the gospel comes in word only, 1 Thess. 1:5; 1 Cor. 4:19, 20; such whose religion stands in word only, and is not attended with a power suitable: that is, there goes not with the word a power sufficient to subdue and work over the heart to a cordial and gracious close with that word that comes to them. Yet such is the noise

and sound of the word, that they are willing to become professors thereof; there is some kind of musicalness in it, especially when well handled and fingered by a skilful preacher. "And lo," saith God unto such preachers, when their auditory is made up of such kind of hearers, "lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not."

2. But then, besides these there is another sort, and they go further than these. For to them the word came, not in word only but also in power: though not in such a power as is sufficient, absolutely against all attempts whatsoever, to bring the soul to glory.

(1.) They attain light or illumination to see much of their state by nature. Heb. 6:4.

(2.) This light stands not in bare speculation, but lets fall upon the conscience convincing arguments to the bowing and humbling of the spirit. 1 Kings, 21:27–29.

(3.) They submit to these convictions and reforms, and may for a time not only come out from them that live in error, but escape the pollutions of the world by the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Peter, 2:18–20; Gal. 3:4; 4:20.

(4.) Yea, so powerful will this dispensation be, that it will prevail with them to do and suffer many things for the vindication of the truth of that gospel which they profess. For the word will be sweet unto them; Christ, the gift of God, will be relished by them. Heb. 6:4, 5. The powers of the world to come will be in them; some workings of the Holy Ghost will be in them; and joy, which is as oil to the wheels, will be with their souls. Luke 8:13.

Thus is it with some professors, who yet cannot be said to depart from iniquity, because the things that now are upon them abide with them but awhile: "For awhile they believe; they rejoice in the light for a season," and

after that return to their old course, and are again entangled with their iniquities and overcome.

Now the causes of this declension, or falling away again unto iniquity, are many.

One is, that this work, this work of power which they have been made partakers of, has not been thorough enough upon all the powers of their souls. Their understandings, their judgments and consciences have been dealt with, but the power of God has not been upon their wills and minds and affections rightly to subdue them to the grace of the gospel.

Therefore also such persons, upon the withdrawing of those influences that at present are mighty upon them, do forthwith forget both what they had and what work it made upon them. Straightway they forget what manner of men they were. It is said of Israel, "They sang his praises; they soon forgat his word." So these; they forget.

They forget what light and what convictions they had.

They forget what sorrow for sin they had.

They forget what tastes of Christ and his word they had.

They forget what joy and comfort they had.

They forget how fair for heaven they were.

And they forget how cleansed once they were. "They have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins." 2 Pet. 1 : 9.

Now, forgetfulness makes things that are past as nothings; and if so, then it can lay no obligations upon the mind to engage it to delight in them; no, not in thoughts of them, as if they were remembered by us.

Forgetfulness is a very dangerous thing; it makes preaching vain, profession vain, faith vain, and all to no purpose. 1 Cor. 15 : 1, 2. Such profession is but a dream, and such professors but as dreamers; all vanishes in the morning. This made Paul so caution the Corinthians that

they should forget not the preaching; and the writer to the Hebrews so earnestly call them, in their backsliding, back to the remembrance of former days, and to the recollecting what it was that then made them so willingly endure their great fight of affliction.

Forgetfulness, I say, makes things nothings; it makes us as if things had never been; and so takes away from the soul one great means of stay, support, and encouragement. When choice David was dejected, the remembrance of the hill Hermon was his stay; when he was to go out against Goliath, the remembrance of the lion and the bear was his support; so when those that have had the power of the things of God upon them, can think of this when they are withdrawn, it will, even the thinking of it, have some kind of operation upon the soul. And therefore you shall find, that the recovering of a backslider usually begins at the remembrance of former things. "Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do thy first works."

It is marvellous to see how some men are captivated with this forgetfulness. Those that sometimes have prayed, cried, groaned, and sighed for eternal life; those that sometimes thought no pains too much, no way too far, no hazards too great to run, for eternal life; those that sometimes were captivated with the word, and with the comforts and joy thereof, and who, had it been possible, would have pulled out their eyes, and have given them to gospel ministers, so dear and sweet were the good tidings which they brought to such. I say, it is marvellous to see how such men are captivated with the forgetfulness of this. They are as if they had never been those men; they are as if they had had no such things, or as if they never had thought about them. Yea, they are strange, and carry it strangely to all those that still are under the power of that word, and of that mighty hand by which sometimes themselves were guided.

Should one say to them, Art not thou the man that I once saw crying under a sermon, that I once heard cry out,

"What must I do to be saved?" and that some time ago I heard speak well of the holy word of God? how askew will they look upon one; or if they will acknowledge that such things were with them once, they do it more like images and rejected ghosts, than men. They look as if they were blasted, withered, cast out and dried to powder, and now fit for nothing but to be cast into the fire and burned. John 15.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

THE MAN IN THE IRON CAGE.

"Now," said Christian, "let me go hence." "Nay, stay," said the Interpreter, "till I have showed thee a little more, and after that thou shalt go on thy way." So he took him by the hand again, and led him into a very dark room, where there sat a man in an iron cage.

Now the man to look on, seemed very sad. He sat with his eyes looking down to the ground, his hands folded together, and he sighed as if he would break his heart. Then said Christian, "What means this?" At which the Interpreter bid him talk with the man.

Then said Christian to the man, "What art thou?" The man answered, "I am what I was not once."

CHRISTIAN. "What wert thou once?"

The man said, "I was once a fair and flourishing professor, both in mine own eyes, and also in the eyes of others; I once was, as I thought, fair for the celestial city, Luke 8:13, and had then even joy at the thoughts that I should get thither."

CHRISTIAN. "Well, but what art thou now?"

MAN. "I am now a man of despair, and am shut up in it as in this iron cage. I cannot get out: O *now* I cannot."

CHRISTIAN. "But how camest thou in this condition?"

MAN. "I left off to watch and be sober; I laid the reins upon the neck of my lusts; I sinned against the light of the

word, and the goodness of God; I have grieved the Spirit, and he is gone; I tempted the devil, and he is come to me; I have provoked God to anger, and he has left me; I have so hardened my heart that I *cannot* repent."

Then said Christian to the Interpreter, "But is there no hope for such a man as this?" "Ask him," said the Interpreter.

Then said Christian, "Is there no hope but you must be kept in the iron cage of despair?"

MAN. "No, none at all."

CHRISTIAN. "Why? the Son of the Blessed is very pitiful."

MAN. "I have crucified him to myself afresh; I have despised his person, I have despised his righteousness, I have counted his blood an unholy thing. I have done despite to the Spirit of grace, Luke 19:14; Heb. 6:4–6; 10:28, 29; therefore I have shut myself out of all the promises, and there now remains to me nothing but threatenings, dreadful threatenings, fearful threatenings of certain judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour me as an adversary."

CHRISTIAN. "For what did you bring yourself into this condition?"

MAN. "For the lusts, pleasures, and profits of this world; in the enjoyment of which I did then promise myself much delight; but now every one of those things also bites me and gnaws me like a burning worm."

CHRISTIAN. "But canst thou not repent and turn?"

MAN. "God hath denied me repentance. His word gives me no encouragement to believe; yea, himself hath shut me up in this iron cage: nor can all the men in the world let me out. O eternity, eternity! how shall I grapple with the misery that I must meet with in eternity?"

Then said the Interpreter to Christian, "Let this man's misery be remembered by thee, and be an everlasting caution to thee."

"Well," said Christian, "this is fearful! God help me to watch and be sober, and to pray that I may shun the cause of this man's misery."

We that religiously name the name of Christ should depart from iniquity, because the Spirit of the Father will else be grieved. Eph. 4:30. The countenancing of iniquity, the not departing therefrom, will grieve the Spirit of God, by which you are sealed to the day of redemption; and that is a sin of a higher nature than men commonly are aware of. He that grieveth the Spirit of God shall smart for it here, or in hell, or both. And that Spirit that sometimes did illuminate, teach, and instruct them, can keep silence, can cause darkness, can withdraw itself, and suffer the soul to sin more and more; and this last is the very judgment of judgments. He that grieves the Spirit, quenches it; and he that quenches it, vexes it; and he that vexes it, sets it against himself, and tempts it to hasten destruction upon himself. 1 Thess. 5:19.

Wherefore take heed, professors, I say, take heed, you that religiously name the name of Christ, that you meddle not with iniquity, that you tempt not the Spirit of the Lord to do such things against you; whose beginnings are dreadful, and whose end in working of judgments is unsearchable. Isa. 63:10; Acts 5:9.

A man knows not whither he is going, nor where he shall stop, that is but entering into temptation; nor whether he shall ever turn back, or go out at the gap that is right before him.

He that has begun to grieve the Holy Ghost, may be suffered to go on until he has sinned that sin which is called the sin against the Holy Ghost. And if God shall once give thee up to that, then thou art in the *iron cage*, out of which there is neither deliverance nor redemption.

There is a sin called the sin against the Holy Ghost,

from which there is no redemption, and this sin doth more than ordinarily befall professors; for there are few, if any, that are not professors, that are at present capable of sinning this sin. They which "were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," Heb. 6:4, 5 — of this sort are they that commit this sin. Peter also describes them to be such, that sin the unpardonable sin: "For if after they have escaped the pollution of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." 2 Pet. 2:2.

The other passage in the tenth of the Hebrews holdeth forth the same thing: "For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries."

These, therefore, are the persons that are the prey for this sin. This sin feedeth upon professors, and they that are such do often fall into the mouth of this eater.

The unpardonable sin, the sin against the Holy Ghost, is a sin of this nature: For a man after he hath made some profession of salvation to come alone by the blood of Jesus, together with some light and power of the same upon his spirit—I say, for him knowingly, wilfully, and despitefully to trample upon the blood of Christ shed on the cross, and to count it an unholy thing, or no better than the blood of another man; and rather to venture his soul any other way, than to be saved by this precious blood.

It is called the sin against the Holy Ghost, because such sin against the manifest light of the Spirit; that is, they have been formerly enlightened into the nature of the gospel, and the merits of the man Christ, and his blood, right-

cousness, intercession, etc., and also have professed and confessed the same, with some life and comfort in and through the profession of him; yet now against all that light, they maliciously and with despite to all their former profession, turn their backs, and trample upon the same.

This sin is immediately committed against the motions and convictions and light of that Holy Spirit of God, that makes it his business to hand forth and manifest the truth and reality of the merits and virtue of the Lord Jesus.

To some men that have grievously sinned under a profession of the gospel, God gives this token of his displeasure: they are denied the power of repentance; their heart is bound, they cannot repent. It is impossible they should ever repent, should they live a thousand years. It is impossible for those fall-aways to be renewed again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame. Now, to have the heart so hardened, so judicially hardened, this is as a bar put in by the Lord God against the salvation of this sinner. This was the burden of Spira's complaint: "I cannot do it; O, now I cannot do it."

This man sees what he has done, what should help him, and what will become of him; yet he cannot repent. He pulled away his shoulder before, he shut his eyes before, and in that very posture God left him; and so he stands to this very day. I have had a fancy that Lot's wife, when she was turned into a pillar of salt, stood yet looking over her shoulder, or else with her face towards Sodom; as the judgment caught her, so it bound her, and left her for a monument of God's anger to after-generations.

I have been the more plain and simple in my writing, because the sin against the Holy Ghost is in these days more common than formerly, and the way unto it more beautified with color and pretence of truth. I may say of

the way to this sin, it is, as was once the way to Jerusalem, strewed with boughs and branches, and by some there is cried a kind of Hosanna to them that are treading those steps to hell. Oh, the plausible pretences, the golden names, the feigned holiness, the demure behavior mixed with damnable hypocrisy, that attend the persons that have forsaken the Lord Jesus, that have despised his person, trampled upon him, and "counted the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing." They have crucified him to themselves, and think that they can go to heaven without him, yea, pretend they love him, when they hate him; pretend they have him, when they have cast him off; pretend they trust in him, when they bid defiance to his undertakings for the world.

So they both went on, and Ignorance he came after. Now, when they had passed him a little way, they entered into a very dark lane, where they met a man whom seven devils had bound with seven strong cords, and were carrying him back to the door that they saw on the side of the hill. Matt. 12 : 45; Prov. 5 : 22. Now good Christian began to tremble, and so did Hopeful, his companion; yet as the devils led away the man, Christian looked to see if he knew him; and he thought it might be one Turn-away that dwelt in the town of Apostasy. But he did not perfectly see his face; for he did hang his head like a thief that is found. But being gone past, Hopeful looked after him, and espied on his back a paper with this inscription: "Wanton professor and damnable apostate."

XXI. THE CHURCH.

FROM THE PREFACE TO THE "HOLY CITY."

Upon a certain First-day, I being together with my brethren in our prison-chamber, they expected that, according to our custom, something should be spoken out of the word for our mutual edification; but at that time I felt myself—it being my turn to speak—so empty, spiritless, and barren, that I thought I should not have been able to speak among them so much as five words of truth, with life and evidence: but at last it so fell out that providentially I cast my eye upon the 11th verse of the 21st chapter of this prophecy of Revelation; upon which when I had considered awhile, methought I perceived something of that Jasper, in whose light you there find this holy city is said to come or descend: wherefore, having got in my eye some dim glimmerings thereof, and finding also in my heart a desire to see further thereinto, I, with a few groans, did carry my meditation to the Lord Jesus for a blessing. This he did forthwith grant, according to his grace; and helping me to set before my brethren, we did all eat and were all refreshed; and behold also, that while I was in the distributing of it, it so increased in my hand that, of the fragments that we left after we had well dined, I gathered up this basketful. Methought the more I cast my eye upon the whole discourse, the more I saw lie in it. Wherefore, setting myself to a more narrow search, through frequent prayer to God—what first with doing, and then with undoing, and after that with doing again—I thus did finish it.

But yet, notwithstanding all my labor and travail in this matter, I do not, neither can I, expect that every godly heart should in every thing see the truth and excellency of what is here discoursed; neither would I have them imagine that I have so thoroughly viewed this holy city, but that much more than I do here crush out is yet

left in the cluster. Alas, I shall only say thus: I have crushed out a little juice to sweeten their lips withal; not doubting but in a little time more large measures of the excellency of this city, and of its sweetness and glory, will by others be opened and unfolded, yea, if not by the servants of the Lord Jesus, yet by the Lord himself, who will have this city builded and set in its own place.

CHURCH-FELLOWSHIP.

It is the ordinance of God, that Christians should be often asserting the things of God to each other; and that by their so doing, they should edify one another.

The doctrine of the gospel is like the dew and the small rain, that distilleth upon the tender grass, wherewith it doth flourish and is kept green.

Christians are like the several flowers in a garden, that have upon each of them the dew of heaven; which being shaken with the wind, let fall their dew at each other's roots, whereby they are jointly nourished and become nourishers of one another.

Church-fellowship, rightly managed, is the glory of all the world. No place, no community, no fellowship is adorned and bespangled with such beauties, as is a church rightly knit together to their Head, and lovingly serving one another.

The church and a profession are the best of places for the upright; but the worst in the world for the cumber-ground.

THE CHURCH A LIGHT.

The Holy Ghost is well pleased to bring in the shining virtues of the church, under the notion of a shining moon; because, as the church herself is compared to the moon, so her virtues are as naturally compared to a shining light: as Christ saith, "Let your light so shine;" and again, "Let your loins be girded, and your lights burning." For indeed,

while we are here, that church and congregation of the Lord doth most shine, and most send forth the golden rays and pleasant beams of Christianity, that is most in the exercise of the aforementioned virtues. Take away the moon, and the night is doubtful; or, though the moon be in the firmament, if she hath lost her light, the night is not thereby made more comfortable. And thus, I say, it is first with the world, where there is no church to shine, or where there is a church that doth not so shine that others may see and be lighted.

SPIRITUAL CHARACTER OF THE CHURCH.

She meddleth not with any man's matters but her own; she comes all along by the king's highway; that is, only by the rules that her Lord hath prescribed for her in his testament. The governors of this world need not at all fear a disturbance from her, or a diminution of aught they have. She will not meddle with their fields nor vineyards, neither will she drink of the water of their wells. Only let her go by the king's highway, and she will not turn to the right hand or to the left, until she has passed all their borders. It is a false report that the governors of the nations have received against the city, this new Jerusalem, if they believe according to the tale that is told of her, that she is and has been of old a rebellious city, and destructive to kings, and a diminisher of their revenues. She is not for meddling with any thing that is theirs, from a thread even to a shoe-latchet. Her glory is spiritual and heavenly, and she is satisfied with what is her own. 'Tis true, the kings and nations of this world shall one day bring their glory and honor to this city; but yet not by outward force or compulsion: none shall constrain them but the love of Christ, and the beauty of this city. "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." The light and beauty of this city, these only shall engage their hearts and overcome them.

Indeed, if any shall, out of mistrust or enmity against this city and her prosperity, bend themselves to disappoint the designs of the eternal God concerning her building and glory, then they must take what follows. Her God in the midst of her is mighty; he will rest in his love, and rejoice over her with singing, and will UNDO all that afflict her. Wherefore, associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; for God is with us.

WARNING TO THE PROFESSOR.

He that sins himself out of the church, can find no good in the world; and they that have sinned God out, can find no good in the church. A church that has sinned God away from it, is a sad lump indeed. You, therefore, that are in God's church, take heed of sinning yourselves out thence; also take heed, that while you keep in, you sin not God away, for thenceforth no good is there. "Yea, woe unto them when I depart from them, saith the Lord."

CHURCH-ORDER.

It is hard to have all things according to rule in the day of the church's affliction, because of the weakness and fearfulness of some, and because possibly those who have most skill in that matter may for a time be laid up in chains. But when the church has rest and quietness, then as she praises God, so she conceives and brings forth governors and good government and rule among her members. David, a man of blood, could not build the house to the Lord, which peaceable Solomon, that man of rest, afterwards did. When armies are engaged and hot in battle, it is harder to keep them in rank and file than when they have rest and time for discipline.

THE CHURCH IN AFFLICTION.

When the church of God is afflicted, both heaven and hell have their hand therein; but from a differing con-

sideration, and to a diverse end. From heaven it comes, that we may remember we have sinned, and that we may be made white and tried; but from hell, that we might sin the more, and that we might despair and be damned.

SATAN'S HOSTILITY TO THE CHURCH.

Satan has tried many ways to be at amity with the church—not because he loves her holiness, but because he hates her welfare. And that he might bring about his enterprise, he sometimes has allured her with the dainty delicacies of this world, the lusts of the flesh and of the eyes, and the pride of life. This being fruitless, he has attempted to entangle and bewitch her with his glorious appearance as an angel of light; and to that end he has made his ministers as the ministers of righteousness, preaching up righteousness, and contending for a divine and holy worship. But this failing also, he has taken in hand at length to fright her into friendship with him, by stirring up the hellish rage of tyrants to frighten and molest her; by finding out strange inventions to torment and afflict her children; by making many bloody examples of her own bowels before her eyes, if by that means he might at last obtain his purpose. But behold, all has been in vain; there can be no reconciliation. And why, but because God himself maintains the enmity? God hath put enmity between the devil and the woman; between that old serpent called the devil and Satan, and the holy and beloved and espoused wife of Christ.

SECURITY OF THE CHURCH.

Gold is a metal so invincible and unconquerable, that no fire can consume it: it may burn it indeed, and melt it; the dross indeed doth consume and give way to the power of the fire, but the gold remains and holds its ground, yea, it gets ground even of the furnace and fire itself; for the

more it is burned and melted, the more it recovers its color, and the more it shakes off its dross and dishonor.

Just thus it is with the people of God, and hath been so even from the beginning: the more men oppressed them, the more they grew. His church has been now for many hundred years in the king of Babylon's furnace; all which time she hath most gloriously endured and withstood the heat; and at last, when the fire hath done its worst against her, behold, there comes out a city of gold. Wherefore, let her be bold to say, even before she comes out of the fire, "When I am tried, I shall come forth as gold."

So long as the church endured hardship and affliction, she was greatly preserved from revolts and backslidings; but after she had turned her face from the sun, and had found the plain of Shinar, Genesis 11, that is, the fleshly delights that the pleasures and profits and honors of this world afford, she, forgetting the word and order of God, was content to dwell in the land of Babel.

As the sins of God's people brought them into captivity, so their sins can hold them there; yea, and when the time comes that grace must fetch them out, yet the oxen that draw this cart may stumble, and the way, through roughness, may shake it sorely. However, heaven rules and overrules: and by one means and another, as the captivity of Israel did seem to linger, so it came out at the time appointed, in the way that best pleased God, that most profited them, and that most confounded those that were their implacable enemies. This therefore should instruct those that yet dwell where the "woman" sitteth, to quietness and patience.

To quietness; for God rules and has the disposal of things. Besides, it is a kind of arraigning of his wisdom, to be discontent at that which at present is upon the wheel. Above all, it displeases him that any should seek, or go

about to revenge their own injuries, or to work their own deliverances; for that is the work of God: nor is he weak, nor has he missed the opportunity; nor does he sleep, but waketh, and waiteth to be gracious.

This also should teach them to be patient, and put them upon bearing what at present they may undergo, patiently. Let them wait upon God; patiently let them wait upon men, and patiently let them bear the fruits of their own transgressions; which though they should be none other but a deferring of the mercy wished for, is enough to try, and crack, and break their patience, if a continual supply and a daily increase thereof be not given by the God of heaven.

And before I conclude this, let me add one word more, to wit, to exhort them to look that they may see what God at present may be doing among the Babylonians.

When God had his people into Babylon of old, he presented them with such varieties there as he never showed them in their own country. And is there nothing now to be seen by them that are not yet delivered from that oppression, that may give them occasion to stay themselves and wonder? What, is preservation nothing? What, is baffling and befooling the enemies of God's church nothing? In the Maryan* days here at home, there were such

* Upon the accession of Mary to the throne of England, the sanguinary laws against heretics were revived, and those shocking scenes of cruelty followed which have fixed upon this princess the epithet of Bloody Queen Mary. Her gloomy bigotry caused that two hundred and seventy-seven persons should be committed to the flames, including prelates, private clergymen, laymen of all ranks, women, and even children.

Among the number were archbishop Cranmer, bishops Ridley, Latimer, and Hooper, John Rogers, John Bradford, and John Philpot.

Bishops Latimer and Ridley were burnt together. When they came to the stake, Dr. Ridley embraced Latimer fervently, and bade him be of good heart; he then knelt by the stake, and after earnestly praying together, they had a short private conversation. A lighted fagot was laid at Dr. Ridley's feet, which caused the other to say, "Be of good

sweet songs sung in the fire, such sweet notes answering them from prison, and such providences, like coals of burning fire, still dropping here and there upon the heads of those that hated God, that it might, and doubtless did, make those that did wisely consider of God's doings, think God was yet near in behalf of his despised and afflicted people.

Deep things are seen by them that are upon the waters. "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep." Indeed it oft falls out that the church sees more of God in affliction, than when she is at rest and ease; when she is tumbled to and fro with waters, then she sees the works of God and his wonders in the deep. And this makes persecution so pleasant a thing; this makes "the ark go upon the face of the waters." She sees more in this her state, than in all the treasures of Egypt.

Nothing is more natural to the church, while in a wilderness condition, than such cups and draughts as the cup of the Lord's fury, the cup of trembling, the cup of astonishment.

Hence she is said to be clothed in sackcloth, to mourn, to weep, to cry out, and to be in pain as a woman in travail. Since the church in the wilderness has been so persecuted, so distressed, so oppressed, and made the seat of so much war, so much blood, and so many murders of her children within her, can it be imagined that she drank of

cheer, Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day, by God's grace, light up such a candle in England, as I trust will never be put out." When Dr. Ridley saw the flame approaching him, he exclaimed, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." Latimer ceased not to say, "O Father of heaven, receive my soul."

Sanders, another martyr, was offered a pardon; but he rejected it, and embraced the stake, saying, "Welcome the cross of Christ! welcome, everlasting life!" Fox's Book of Martyrs and Hume's Hist. Eng.

more of these cups? Yes, yes, she has drunk the red wine at the Lord's hand, even the cup of blood, of fury, of trembling, and of astonishment; witness her own cries, sighs, tears, and tremblings, with the cries of the widows, children, and orphans within her.

But all these cups are of pure gold. They are of God's ordaining, appointing, filling; and also sanctified by him for good to those of his that drink them. Hence Moses chose rather to drink a brimmer of these, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

The sourness, bitterness, and wormwood of them, therefore, is only to the flesh, that loveth neither God, nor Christ, nor grace. The afflictions, therefore, that the church in the wilderness hath met with, these cups of gold, are of more worth than are all the treasures of Egypt; they are needful and profitable, and praiseworthy also, and tend to the augmenting of our glory when the next world shall come.

Besides, they are signs, tokens, and golden-marks of love, and jewels that set off the beauty of the church in the sight of God the more. They are also a means by which men are proved to be sound, honest, faithful, and true lovers of God; to be those whose graces are not counterfeit, feigned, or unsound, but true, and such as will be found to praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

And this has been the cause that the men of our church in the wilderness have gloried in tribulation, taking pleasure in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, and in distresses, for Christ's sake. Yea, this is the reason why they have bade one another rejoice, when they fell into divers temptations, saying, "Happy is the man that endureth temptations;" and, "Behold, we count them happy that endure." And again, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye."

These, therefore, are vessels of pure gold, though they

contain such bitter draughts, at which we make so many wry faces before we can get them down.

Do you think that a Christian, having even this cup in his hand to drink, would change it for a draught of that which is in the hand of the woman that sits on the back of the scarlet-colored beast? No, verily; for he knows that her sweet is poison; and that his bitter is to purge his soul, body, life, and religion, of death.

God sends his love-tokens to his church two ways; sometimes by her friends, sometimes by her enemies. When they come by the hand of a friend, as by a minister, a brother, or by the Holy Ghost, then they come smoothly, sweetly, and are taken, and go down like honey. But when these love-tokens come to them by the hand of an enemy, then they are handed to them roughly. Pharaoh handed love-tokens to them roughly; the king of Babylon handed these love-tokens to them roughly. They bring them of malice; God sends them of love. They bring them and give them to us, hoping they will be our death; they give them therefore with many a foul curse; but God blesses them still.

Nor is this cup so bitter but that our Lord himself drank deep of it, before it was handed to his church. He did, as loving mothers do, drink thereof himself, to show us it is not poison, also to encourage us to drink it for his sake, and for our endless health. Therefore the cup is called Christ's cup: "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink of? Ye shall indeed drink of my cup." Here you see they are joined in a communion in this cup of affliction.

But these are not all the cups that belong to the church in the wilderness. There is also a cup, out of which, at times, is drunk what is exceeding sweet. It is called the cup of consolation, the cup of salvation; a cup in which God himself is, as David said, "The Lord is the portion of my cup."

This cup, they that are in the church in the wilderness have usually for an after-draught to that bitter one that went before. Thus, as tender mothers give their children plums or sugar to sweeten their palate after they have drunk a bitter potion, so God gives his children the cups of salvation and consolation after they have suffered awhile: "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation aboundeth by Christ."

Some of these cups are filled until they run over; as David said his did, when the valley of the shadow of death was before him: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

This is that which the apostle calls "exceeding"—that which is beyond measure. "I am," says he, "filled with comfort; I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation."

Now he has one answering the other: "Thou hast made summer and winter; thou hast made the warm beams of thy sun answerable to the cold of the dark night." This may yet be signified by the building of this house, this type of the church in the wilderness, in so pleasant a place as the forest of Lebanon was. Lebanon! Lebanon was one of the sweetest places in all the land of Canaan. Therefore we read of the fruit of Lebanon, of the streams from Lebanon; the scent, the smell, the glory of Lebanon; and also of the wine and flowers of Lebanon.

Lebanon! That was one thing that wrought with Moses to desire that he might go over Jordan, that he might see that goodly mountain, and Lebanon. The glory and excellent beauty of the church Christ also setteth forth by comparing her to Lebanon: "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as a honeycomb; honey and milk are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon."

I know there are extravagant opinions in the world

about the kingdom of Christ, as if it consisted in temporal glory in part; and as if he would take it to him by carnal weapons, and so maintain it in its greatness and grandeur. But I confess myself an alien to these notions, and believe and profess quite the contrary, and look for the coming of Christ to judgment personally; and betwixt this and that, for his coming in Spirit and in the power of his word, to destroy antichrist, to inform kings, and so to give quietness to his church on earth: which shall assuredly be accomplished when the reign of the beast, the false prophet, and the man of sin is out.

Let this teach men not to think that the church is cursed of God, because she is put in a wilderness state. Alas, that is but to train her up in a way of solitariness, to make her Canaan the more welcome to her. Rest is sweet to a laboring man.

Yea, this condition is the first step to heaven; yea, it is a preparation to that kingdom. God's ways are not as man's: "I have chosen thee," saith he, "in the furnace of affliction." When Israel came out of Egypt, they were led of God into the wilderness. But why? That he might have them to a land that he had espied for them, that he might bring them to a city of habitation.

The world know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of our God. Do you think that saints that dwell in the world, and that have more of the mind of God than the world, could so rejoice in God, in the cross, in tribulations and distresses, were they not assured that through many tribulations is the very road to heaven?

Let this then encourage the saints to hope, and to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, notwithstanding present tribulations. This is our seed-time, our winter: afflictions are to try us of what mettle we are made; yea, and to shake off worm-eaten fruit, and such as are rotten at core.

Troubles for Christ's sake are but like the prick of an awl in the tip of the ear, in order to hang a jewel there.

Let this also put the saints upon patience. When we know that a trial will have an end, we are encouraged to exercise patience. I have a bad master, but I have only a year to serve under him, and that makes me serve him with patience. I have but a mile to go in this dirty way, and then I shall have my path pleasant and green, and this makes me tread the dirty way with patience.

I am now in my rags; but by that a quarter of a year is come and gone, two hundred* a year comes into my hand; wherefore I will wait and exercise patience. Thus might I multiply comparisons.

Be patient, then, my brethren. But how long? "To the coming of the Lord." But when will that be? "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

How unseen the strength of the church under persecution is of all that are without her. Alas, they think that she will be run down with a push; or, as they said, "What do these feeble Jews? Will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish which are burnt? Alas, if a fox go up, he will even break down their stone wall."

But do you think these men saw the strength of the Jews? No, no; their pillars were within, and so were shadowed from their eyes. David himself could not tell what judgment to make of the way of the world against the people of God, until he went into the sanctuary of God.

How then can the world judge of the condition of the saints? Alas, had they known the church's strength, surely they would not have so furiously assaulted her. But what have they got by all they have done, either against the Head or body of the church?

She has yet being in the world, and will have, shall have, though all the nations on earth should gather them-

* That is, pounds: a large income in the England of Bunyan's day.

selves together against her. Nor is it the cutting off of many that will make her cease to flourish. Alas, were she not sometimes pruned and trimmed, her boughs would stand too thick. Those therefore that are taken away with God's pruning-hooks, are removed that the under branches may grow the better.

No man needs be afraid to let Jesus Christ be chief in the world: he envies nobody; he designs the hurt of none: his kingdom is not of this world, nor doth he covet temporal matters: let but his wife, his church, alone, to enjoy her purchased privileges, and all shall be well; which privileges of hers, since they are soul-concerns, make no infringement upon any man's liberties. Let but faith and holiness walk the streets without control, and you may be as happy as the world can make you. I speak now to them that contend with him.

But if seasonable counsel will not go down, if hardness of heart and blindness of mind and so perishing from the way shall overtake you, it is but what you of old have been cautioned of: "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

The very name of Jesus is the very tower of the Christian church, and that by which she frights the world, not designedly, but through their misunderstanding; for neither she nor her Jesus is for doing them any hurt. However, this is that which renders her yet, in their eye, terrible as an army with banners.

Always when antichrist made his inroads upon the church in the wilderness, to slay, to cut off, and to kill,

yet some of the pillars stood; they were not all burnt in the fire, nor cut down. They said indeed, "Come, let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." But what then? There is a difference betwixt saying and doing; the bush was not therefore consumed because it was set on fire; the church shall not be consumed, although she be afflicted.

And the reason is, because God has his reserve: therefore if Abel falls by the hand of Cain, Seth is put in his place; if Moses is taken away, Joshua shall succeed him; and if the devil break the neck of Judas, Matthias is at hand to take his office. God has a succession of pillars in his house; he has to himself a reserve.

They therefore brought out Faithful, to do with him according to their law; and first they scourged him, then they buffeted him, then they lanced his flesh with knives; after they had stoned him with stones, they pricked him with their swords; and last of all, they burned him to ashes at the stake. Thus came Faithful to his end. Now I saw in my dream that Christian went not forth alone, for there was one whose name was Hopeful—being so made by the beholding of Christian and Faithful in their words and behavior in their sufferings at the fair—who joined himself unto him; and entering into a brotherly covenant, told him that he would be his companion.

Thus one died to bear testimony to the truth, and another rises out of his ashes, to be a companion with Christian in his pilgrimage.

"And she bare a son, and called his name Seth; for God, saith she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." Gen. 4. When Seth comes, then the ground is made good again; then a living saint is found to stand, and maintain that truth which but now his brother bled for.

THE FUTURE GLORY OF THE CHURCH.

Thy children shall all be holy or righteous, and "great shall be the peace of thy children; and the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it." Surely the Holy Ghost would never have spoken such a word as this if he had not intended to show us that at the day of the setting up of this Jerusalem, a great harvest of sinners shall be gathered by the grace of the gospel. But the truth is, the Scriptures go with open arms towards the latter end of the world, even as if they would grasp and compass about almost all people then upon the face of the whole earth with the grace and mercy of God: "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Never was fair weather after foul, nor warm weather after cold, nor a sweet and beautiful spring after a heavy and nipping and terrible winter, so comfortable, sweet, and desirable and welcome to the poor birds and beasts of the field, as this day will be to the church of God. Darkness! it was the plague of Egypt; it is an empty, forlorn, desolate, solitary, and discomforting state. Wherefore light, even the illuminating grace of God, especially in the measure that it shall be communicated unto us at that day, it must needs be precious. In light there is warmth and pleasure. It is by the light of the sun that the whole universe appears unto us distinctly, and it is by the heat thereof that every thing groweth and flourisheth; all which will now be gloriously and spiritually answered in this holy and new Jerusalem. O how clearly will all the spiders and dragons and owls and foul spirits of antichrist, at that day, be discovered by the light hereof. Now also will all the pretty and little birds in the Lord's field, most sweetly send forth their pleasant notes, and all the flowers and herbs in his garden spring. Then will it be said to the church by her husband and Saviour, "Rise up, my love,

my fair one, and come away: for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vine with her tender grapes give a good smell." You know how pleasant this is, even to be fulfilled in the letter of it, not only to birds and beasts, but to men; especially it is pleasant to such men as have for several years been held in the chains of affliction. It must needs therefore be most pleasant and desirable to the afflicted church of Christ, who hath lain now in the dungeon of antichrist for above a thousand years. But, Lord, how will this lady, when she gets her liberty and when she is returned to her own city, how will she then take pleasure in the warmth and spaugling beams of thy shining grace, and solace herself with thee in the garden, among the nuts and pomegranates, among the lilies and flowers, and all the chief spices!

"And in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river; was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

This tree of life is the Lord Jesus Christ; and that he is here called a tree, is to show how fruitful and exceeding advantageous he in all his benefits will be to the inhabitants of this city. This is the tree under whose branches the fowls of heaven shall now most safely lodge, and find relief from the hot and fainting beams of the persecuting sun of this world.

In that he saith this city hath a tree of life in it, he alludes to the garden of Eden, the pleasant paradise that God began the world withal; whereby he signifies, that as the world began with a paradise, so also it shall end with a paradise, when sin and Satan have done their worst. This new Jerusalem shall be the wind-up of the world;

and in it shall stand the tree of life, as there stood one in the goodly garden which was the beginning thereof.

Now this tree of life being in the midst of this city, it signifies that the inhabitants of it shall be sweetly shadowed, refreshed, and defended with its coolness, and also sweetly nourished and comforted with its dainties. "As the apple-tree is among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." Indeed the shadow of this tree of life, as always it is refreshing to the tempted and weary, so now it will be far more: "They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn and grow as the vine, and the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon." His shadow will make us return, that is, to our first love—to the days of our youth, to our young, fresh, tender, and flourishing faith, love, and self-denial, that we received in the day of our espousals.

O they will be green, savory, reviving, flourishing, growing Christians that shall walk the streets of the new Jerusalem.

Now there shall be a oneness of judgment and understanding in the hearts of all saints; they shall be now no more two, but one in the Lord's hand.

Alas, the saints are yet but as an army routed, and are apt sometimes through fear, and sometimes through forgetfulness, to mistake the word of their Captain-general the Son of God, and are also too, too prone to shoot and kill even their very right-hand man. But at that day all such doing shall be laid aside, for the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea; which knowledge shall then strike through the heart and liver of all swerving and unsound opinions in Christ's matters; for then shall every one of the Christians call upon the name of the Lord, and that with one pure lip, or language, to serve him with one consent.

XXII. THE MINISTRY.

IMPORTANCE OF THE MINISTRY.

The church itself, without its watchmen, is a weak, feeble, and very helpless thing. What can the lady or mistress do to defend herself against thieves and sturdy villains, if there be none but she at home? It is said, when the shepherd is smitten, the sheep will be scattered. What could the temple do without its watchmen? 1 Chron. 9:24.

Then let the churches love their pastors, hear their pastors, be ruled by their pastors, and suffer themselves to be watched over, and to be exhorted, counselled, and if need be, reproved and rebuked by their pastors. And let the ministers not sleep, but be watchful, and look to the ordinances, to the souls of the saints, and the gates of the church. Watch, man; *watch, man; watch!*

DUTY OF CHURCHES TO THE MINISTRY.

O churches, let your ministers be beautified with your love; that they may beautify you with their love, and also be an ornament unto you, and to that gospel they minister to you, for Jesus Christ's sake.

DIFFERENT CLASSES OF MINISTERS.

Is the soul such an excellent thing, and is the loss thereof so unspeakably great? Then this should teach the people to be very careful to whom they commit the teaching and guidance of their souls.

This is a business of the greatest concern: men will be careful to whom they commit their children, whom they make the executors of their wills, in whose hand they trust the writing and evidences of their lands; but how much more careful should we be, unto whom we commit the teaching and guidance of our souls. And yet most men are in these matters least of all careful.

There are idol shepherds. Zech. 11:7. There are

foolish shepherds. Zech. 11 : 15. There are shepherds that feed themselves, and not their flocks. Ezek. 34 : 2. There are hard-hearted and pitiless shepherds. Zech. 11 : 3. There are shepherds that instead of healing, smite, push, and wound the diseased. Ezek. 34 : 4, 21. There are shepherds that cause their flocks to go astray. Jer. 50 : 6. And there are shepherds that feed their flocks : these are the shepherds to whom thou shouldst commit thy soul for teaching and for guidance.

Then said the Interpreter, "Come in; I will show thee that which will be profitable to thee." So he commanded his man to light a candle, and bade Christian follow him. So he had him into a private room, and bid his man open a door : the which when he had done, Christian saw the picture of a very grave person hang up against the wall; and this was the fashion of it : it had eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in its hand, the law of truth was written upon its lips, the world was behind its back; it stood as if it pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over its head.

Then said Christian, "What meaneth this?"

INTERPRETER. "The man whose picture this is, is one of a thousand; he can beget children, 1 Cor. 4 : 15, travail in birth with children, Gal. 4 : 19, and nurse them himself when they are born. And whereas thou seest him with his eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in his hand, and the law of truth written on his lips; it is to show thee that his work is to know and to unfold dark things to sinners; even as also thou seest him stand as if he pleaded with men. And whereas thou seest the world as cast behind him, and that a crown hangs over his head; that is to show thee that, slighting and despising the things that are present for the love that he hath to his Master's service, he is sure, in the world that comes next, to have glory for his reward.

"Now," said the Interpreter, "I have showed thee this picture first, because the man whose picture this is, is the only man whom the Lord of the place whither thou art going hath authorized to be thy guide in all difficult places thou mayest meet with in the way; wherefore, take good heed to what I have showed thee, and bear well in thy mind what thou hast seen, lest in thy journey thou meet with some that pretend to lead thee right, but their way goes down to death."

DUTY OF MINISTERS.

Would Jesus Christ have mercy offered in the first place to the biggest sinners? then let God's ministers tell them so.

There is a tendency in us, I know not how it doth come about, when we are converted to contemn them that are left behind. Poor fools as we are, we forget that we ourselves were so.

But would it not become us better, since we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, so to act towards them that we may give them convincing ground to believe that we have found that mercy which also sets open the door for them to come and partake with us?

Austerity doth not become us, neither in doctrine nor in conversation. We ourselves live by grace; let us give as we receive, and labor to persuade our fellow-sinners whom God has left behind us, to follow after, that they may partake with us of grace. We are saved by grace, let us live like them that are gracious. Let all our things to the world be done in charity towards them; pity them, pray for them, be familiar with them for their good. Let us lay aside our foolish, worldly, carnal grandeur; let us not walk the streets, and have such behaviors as signify we are scarce for touching the poor ones that are left behind, no, not with a pair of tongs.

Remember your Lord; he was familiar with publicans

and sinners to a proverb. "Behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber; a friend of publicans and sinners." Matt. 11 : 19. The first part, concerning his gluttonous eating and drinking, to be sure, was a horrible slander; but for the other, nothing was ever spoken truer of him by the world.

Now why should we lay hands cross on this text; that is, choose good victuals and love the sweet wine better than the salvation of the poor publican? Why not be familiar with sinners, provided we hate their spots and blemishes, and seek that they may be healed of them? Why not be fellowly with our carnal neighbors, if we take occasion to do so that we may drop and be distilling some good doctrine upon their souls? Why not go to the poor man's house, and give him a penny and a scripture to think upon?

MINISTERS WARNED.

"There were giants in the earth in those days." These words seem to be spoken to show us the hazards that Noah run while he preached the truth of God; he incurred the displeasure of the giants, who doubtless made all men tremble and kept the whole world in awe. But Noah must engage the giants, he must not fear the face of a giant.

This way God also took with Moses and with his people of Israel. They must go to possess the land of the giants, a people high and tall as the cedars, a people of whom went the proverb, "Who can stand before the children of Anak?" They must not be afraid of Og the king of Bashan, though his head be as high as the ridge of a house, and his bedstead a bedstead of iron.

This should teach us not to fear the faces of men; no, not the faces of the mighty; not to fear them in the matters of God, though they should run upon us like a giant.

Persecution, or the appearance of the giants against the servants of God, is no new business; not a thing of

yesterday, but of old, even when Noah did minister for God in the world.

"And Noah began to be a husbandman." This trade he took up for want of better employment; or rather, in mine opinion, from some liberty he took to himself to be remiss in his care and work as a preacher. For seeing the church was now at rest, and having the world before them, they still retaining outward sobriety, poor Noah, good man, now might think with himself, "I need not now be so diligent, watchful, and painful in my ministry as formerly; the church is but small, without opposition and also well settled in the truth; I may now take to myself a little time to tamper with worldly things." So he makes an essay upon husbandry: "He began to be a husbandman." Ha, Noah, it was better with thee when thou wast better employed; yea, it was better with thee when a world of ungodly men set themselves against thee—yea, when every day thy life was in danger to be destroyed by the giants, against whom thou wast preacher above a hundred years—for then thou didst walk with God: then thou wast better than all the world; but now thou art in the relapse.

MINISTERS, SERVANTS OF THE CHURCH.

Gifts and office make no men sons of God; as so, they are but servants; though these, as ministers and apostles, were servants of the highest form. It is the church, as such, that is the lady, a queen, the bride, the Lamb's wife; and prophets, apostles, and ministers are but servants, stewards, laborers for her good.

As therefore the lady is above the servant, the queen above the steward, or the wife above all her husband's officers, so is the church, as such, above these officers.

GIFTS AND GRACE IN MINISTERS.

A tinkling cymbal, 1 Cor. 13: 1, 2, is an instrument of

music with which a skilful player can make such melodious and heart-inflaming music, that all who hear him play can scarcely hold from dancing; and yet behold, the cymbal hath not life, neither comes the music from it, but because of the art of him that plays therewith; so then the instrument at last may come to naught and perish, though in times past such music hath been made upon it.

Just thus I saw it was and will be with them that have gifts, but want saving grace: they are in the hand of Christ, as the cymbal in the hand of David; and as David could with the cymbal make that mirth in the service of God as to elevate the hearts of the worshippers, Christ can so use these gifted men, as with them to affect the souls of his people in his church; and yet when he hath done all, hang them by, as lifeless, though sounding cymbals.

A man may be used as a servant in the church of God, and may receive many gifts and much knowledge of the things of heaven, and yet at last, himself be no more than a very bubble and nothing.

This our day doth indeed abound with gifts; many sparkling wits are seen in every corner; men have the word and truths of Christ at their fingers' ends. But alas, with many, yea a great many, there is naught but wits and gifts: they are but words; all their religion lieth in their tongues and heads; the power of what they say and know is seen in others, not in themselves. These are like the lord on whom the king of Israel leaned; they shall see the plenty, the blessed plenty that God doth provide and will bestow upon his church, but they shall not taste thereof.

Alas, great light, great parts, great works, and great confidence of heaven, may be where there is no faith of God's elect, no love of the Spirit, no repentance unto salvation, no sanctification of the Spirit, and so, consequently, no saving grace.

THE FALSE MINISTER.

So Christian and Hopeful went on, and Ignorance followed. They went then till they came to a place where they saw a way put itself into their way, and seemed withal to lie as straight as the way which they should go; and here they knew not which of the two to take, for both seemed straight before them; therefore, here they stood still to consider.

And as they were thinking about the way, behold, a man black of flesh, but covered with a very light robe, came to them, and asked them why they stood there. They answered, that they were going to the celestial city, but knew not which of these ways to take. "Follow me," said the man; "it is thither that I am going." So they followed him in the way that but now came into the road, which by degrees turned, and turned them so far from the city that they desired to go to, that in a little time their faces were turned away from it; yet they followed him. But by and by, before they were aware, he led them both within the compass of a net, in which they were both so entangled that they knew not what to do; and with that the white robe fell off from the black man's back: then they saw where they were. Wherefore, there they lay crying some time, for they could not get themselves out.

Then said Christian to his fellow, "Now do I see myself in an error. Did not the shepherds bid us beware of the flatterer?" Thus they lay bewailing themselves in the net. At last they spied a shining one coming towards them with a whip of small cords in his hand. When he was come to the place where they were, he asked them whence they came, and what they did there. They told him that they were poor pilgrims going to Zion, but were led out of their way by a black man clothed in white, who bid us, said they, follow him, for he was going thither too. Then said he with the whip, "It is Flatterer, a false apos-

tle, that hath transformed himself into an angel of light." So he rent the net, and let the men out.

Then said he to them, "Follow me, that I may set you in your way again." So he led them back to the way which they had left to follow the flatterer. Then he asked them, saying, "Where did you lie the last night?" They said, "With the shepherds upon the delectable mountains." He asked them then, if they had not a note of direction for the way. They answered, "Yes." "But did you not," said he, "when you were at a stand, pluck out and read your note?" They answered, "No." He asked them, "Why?" They said they forgot. He asked, moreover, if the shepherds did not bid them beware of the flatterer. They answered, "Yes; but we did not imagine," said they, "that this fine-spoken man had been he." Rom. 16 : 17, 18.

Then I saw in my dream that he commanded them to lie down, Deut. 29 : 2; which when they did, he chastised them sore, to teach them the good way wherein they should walk, 2 Chron. 6 : 26, 27; and as he chastised them he said, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent." This done, he bid them go on their way, and take heed to the other directions of the shepherds. So they thanked him for his kindness, and went softly along the right way, singing.

Another reason why delusions do so easily take place in the hearts of the ignorant, is because those that pretend to be their teachers do behave themselves so basely among them. And indeed I may say of these, as our Lord said of the Pharisees in another case, All the blood of the ignorant, from the beginning of the world, shall be laid to the charge of this generation. They that pretend they are sent of the Lord, and come saying, Thus saith the Lord; we are the servants of the Lord; our commission is from the Lord—I say, those who pretend themselves to be the preachers of truth, but are not, do by their loose conversa-

tion render the true doctrine of God and his Son Jesus Christ contemptible, and do give the adversary mighty encouragement to cry out against the truths of our Lord Jesus Christ, because of their wicked walking. Now "shall not his soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" who pretend to be teachers of the people in goodness, when, as for the most part of them, they are the men that at this day do harden their hearers in their sins, by giving them such ill examples that none goeth beyond them for impiety? As for example, Would a parishioner learn to be proud? he or she need look no further than to the priest, his wife, and family; for there is a notable pattern before them. Would the people learn to be wanton? they may also see a pattern among their teachers. Would they learn to be drunkards? they may also have that from some of their ministers; for indeed they are ministers in this, to minister ill examples to their congregations. Again, would the people learn to be covetous? they need but look to their ministers, and they shall have a lively, or rather a deadly, resemblance set before them, in both riding and running after great benefices and parsonages, by night and by day; nay, they among themselves will scramble for the same. I have seen, that so soon as a man hath but departed from his benefice as he calls it, either by death or out of covetousness of a bigger, we have had one priest from this town, and another from that, so run for these tithe-cocks and handfuls of barley, as if it were their proper trade and calling to hunt after the same.

A covetous minister is a base thing; a pillar more symbolizing Lot's wife, than a holy apostle of Jesus Christ.

The unbelieving world slight the Scriptures because carnal priests tickle the ears of their hearers with vain philosophy and deceit, and thereby harden their hearts

against the simplicity of the gospel and word of God; which things the apostle admonished those that have a mind to close in with Christ, to avoid, saying, "Beware lest any man," be he what he will, "spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men and rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

And you who muzzle up your people in ignorance, with Aristotle, Plato, and the rest of the heathenish philosophers, and preach little if any thing of Christ rightly—I say unto you, that you will find you have sinned against God and beguiled your hearers, when God shall in the judgment-day lay the cause of the damnation of many thousands of souls to your charge, and say, "I will require their blood at your hands."

THE MINISTER AT THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Some men, it is to be feared, at the day of judgment, will be found to be the authors of destroying whole nations. How many souls, do you think, Balaam with his deceit will have to answer for? How many Mahomet? How many the Pharisees that hired the soldiers to say the disciples stole away Jesus, and by that means stumbled their brethren to this day?

How many poor souls hath Bonner to answer for, think you; and several filthy, blind priests? How many souls have they been the means of destroying by their ignorance and corrupt doctrine? preaching that which was no better for their souls than ratsbane to the body, for filthy lucre's sake. They shall see that they, many of them it is to be feared, will have whole towns to answer for, whole cities to answer for. Ah, friend, I tell thee, thou that hast taken in hand to preach to the people, it may be thou hast taken in hand thou canst not tell what. Will it not grieve thee to see thy whole parish come bellowing after thee to hell, crying out, This we may thank thee for; thou didst not teach us the truth; thou didst lead us away with fables;

thou wast afraid to tell us of our sins, lest we should not put meat fast enough into thy mouth. O cursed wretch, that ever thou shouldst beguile us thus, deceive us thus, flatter us thus. We would have gone out to hear the word abroad, but that thou didst reprove us, and also tell us that that which we see now is the way of God was heresy and a deceivable doctrine, and wast not contented, blind guide as thou wert, to fall into the ditch thyself, but hast also led us thither with thee.

I say, look to thyself, lest thou cry out when it is too late, Send Lazarus to my people, my friends, my children, my congregation to whom I preached, and whom I beguiled through my folly. Send him to the town in which I did preach last, lest I be the cause of their damnation.

BUNYAN'S MINISTRY.

In my preaching of the word, I took special notice of this one thing, namely, that the Lord did lead me to begin where his word begins with sinners; that is, to condemn all flesh, and to open and allege that the curse of God by the law doth belong to, and lay hold on all men as they come into the world, because of sin.

Now this part of my work I fulfilled with great feeling; for the terrors of the law, and guilt for my transgressions, lay heavy on my conscience: I preached what I felt, what I smartingly did feel; even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment.

Indeed, I have been as one sent to them from the dead; I went myself in chains, to preach to them in chains; and carried that fire in my own conscience, that I persuaded them to be aware of. I can truly say, and that without dissembling, that when I have been to preach, I have gone full of guilt and terror even to the pulpit-door, and there it hath been taken off, and I have been at liberty in my mind until I have done my work; and then immediately, even before I could get down the pulpit-stairs, I have been as

bad as I was before; yet God carried me on, but surely with a strong hand, for neither guilt nor hell could take me off my work.

Thus I went on for the space of two years, crying out against men's sins, and their fearful state because of them. After which the Lord came in upon my soul with some sure peace and comfort through Christ; for he did give me many sweet discoveries of his blessed grace through him: wherefore now I altered my preaching—for still I preached what I saw and felt. Now, therefore, I did much labor to hold forth Jesus Christ in all his offices, relations, and benefits unto the world; and did strive also to discover, to condemn, and remove those false supports and props on which the world doth both lean and by them fall and perish. On these things also I staid as long as on the other.

When I have been preaching, I thank God, my heart hath often all the time of this and the other exercise, with great earnestness cried to God that he would make the word effectual to the salvation of the soul; still being grieved lest the enemy should take the word away from the conscience, and so it should become unfruitful: wherefore I have labored so to speak the word, as that thereby, if it were possible, the sin and person guilty might be particularized by it.

And when I have done the exercise, it hath gone to my heart to think the word should now fall as rain on stony places; still wishing from my heart, Oh, that they who have heard me speak this day did but see as I do, what sin, death, hell, and the curse of God are; and also what the grace, and love, and mercy of God are, through Christ, to men in such a case as they are who are yet estranged from him. And indeed, I did often say in my heart before the Lord, that if I should be hanged up presently before their eyes, and it would be a means to awaken

them and confirm them in the truth, I gladly should be contented.

For I have been in my preaching, especially when I have been engaged in the doctrine of life by Christ without works, as if an angel of God had stood at my back to encourage me. Oh, it hath been with such power and heavenly evidence upon my own soul, while I have been laboring to unfold it, to demonstrate it, and to fasten it upon the consciences of others, that I could not be contented with saying, I believe, and am sure. Methought I was more than sure—if it be lawful thus to express myself—that those things which then I asserted were true.

If any of those who were awakened by my ministry did after that fall back—as sometimes too many did—I can truly say, their loss hath been more to me than if my own children, begotten of my body, had been going to their grave. I think verily I may speak it without any offence to the Lord, nothing has gone so near me as that; unless it was the fear of the loss of the salvation of my own soul. I have counted as if I had goodly buildings and lordships in those places where my children were born: my heart hath been so wrapped up in the glory of this excellent work, that I counted myself more blessed and honored of God by this, than if he had made me emperor of the Christian world or the lord of all the glory of the earth without it. Oh these words: "He that converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death." "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise." "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." "For what is our hope, our joy, our crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." These, I say,

with many others of a like nature, have been great refreshments to me.

I have observed that a word cast in by the by, hath done more execution in a sermon, than all that was spoken besides: sometimes also, when I have thought I did no good, then I did the most of all; and at other times, when I thought I could catch them, I have fished for nothing.

BUNYAN'S CHARACTER AND PRINCIPLES.

For my descent, it was, as is well known by many, of a low and inconsiderable generation; my father's house being of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all the families of the land. Wherefore I have not, as others, to boast of noble blood and of any high-born estate according to the flesh; though all things considered, I magnify the heavenly Majesty for that by this door he brought me into the world, to partake of the grace and life that is in Christ by the gospel.

What need you, before you have showed one syllable of a reasonable argument in opposition to what I assert, thus trample my person, my gifts, and grace—have I any—so disdainfully under your feet, because of my low descent among men; stigmatizing me for a person of that rank that need not to be heeded. And what, is my rank so mean that the most gracious and godly among you may not duly and soberly consider what I have said? Was it not the act of the false apostles to say thus—to bespatter a man that his doctrine might be disregarded? "Is not this the carpenter?" and, "His bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible," did not use to be in the mouths of the saints; for they knew the wind blew where it listed. Neither is it high birth, worldly breeding, or wealth; but electing love, grace, and the wisdom that comes from heaven, that those who strive for strictness of order in the things and kingdom of Christ, should have in regard and

esteem. Need I read you a lecture? Hath not God chosen the foolish, the weak, the base, yea and even things that are not to bring to naught things that are? Why then do you despise my rank, my state, and quality in the world?

Since you would know by what name I would be distinguished from others, I tell you, I would be, and I hope I am, *a Christian;* and choose, if God should count me worthy, to be called *a Christian, a believer,* or other such name which is approved by the Holy Ghost.

Your artificial, squibbling suggestions to the world about myself, my imprisonment, and the like, I freely bind unto me as an ornament among the rest of my reproaches, till the Lord shall wipe them off at his coming.

Faith and holiness are my professed principles, with an endeavor, so far as in me lieth, to be at peace with all men. What shall I say? Let mine enemies themselves be judges, if any thing in these following doctrines, or if aught that any man hath heard me preach, doth or hath, according to the true intent of my words, savored either of heresy or rebellion. I say again, let them themselves be judges, if aught they find in my writing or preaching doth render me worthy of almost twelve years' imprisonment, or one that deserveth to be hanged or banished for ever, according to their tremendous sentence. Indeed my principles are such as lead me to a denial to communicate in the things of the kingdom of Christ with the ungodly and open profane; neither can I consent that my soul should be governed in any of my approaches to God by the superstitious inventions of this world, because commanded to the contrary, or commended for so refusing. Wherefore, excepting in this one thing—for which I ought not to be rebuked—I shall, I trust, in despite of slander and false-

hood, discover myself at all times a peaceable and obedient subject. But if nothing will do, unless I make my conscience a continual butchery or slaughter-shop—unless, putting out mine own eyes, I commit myself to the blind to lead me, as I doubt not is desired by some—I have determined, the Almighty God being my help and shield, yet to suffer, if frail life might continue so long, even till the moss shall grow on mine eyebrows, rather than thus to violate my faith and principles.

To the reader. I marvel not that both yourself and others do think my long imprisonment strange—or rather strangely of me for the sake of that—for verily I should also have done it myself, had not the Holy Ghost long since forbidden me. 1 Pet. 4 : 12 ; 1 John, 3 : 13. Nay, verily, notwithstanding that, had the adversary but fastened the supposition of guilt upon me, my long trials might by this time have put it beyond dispute ; for I have not hitherto been so sordid, as to stand to a doctrine right or wrong ; much less, when so weighty an argument as above eleven years' imprisonment is continually dogging of me to weigh and pause and weigh again the grounds and foundation of those principles for which I thus have suffered. But having not only at my trial asserted them, but also since—even all this tedious tract of time, in cool blood, a thousand times—by the word of God examined them, and found them good, I cannot, I dare not now revolt or deny the same, on pain of eternal damnation.

XXIII. ANTICHRIST.

ANTICHRIST DESCRIBED.

Antichrist is the adversary of Christ; an adversary really, a friend pretendedly. So then antichrist is one that is against Christ; one that is for Christ, and one that is contrary to him; and this is that "mystery of iniquity."

Against him in deed; for him in word, and contrary to him in practice: antichrist is so proud as to go before Christ, so humble as to pretend to come after him, and so audacious as to say that himself is He. Antichrist will cry up Christ; antichrist will cry down Christ; antichrist will proclaim that himself is one above Christ.

Antichrist is the "man of sin," the "son of perdition;" a beast that hath two horns like a lamb, but speaks as a dragon.

Christ is the Son of God; antichrist is the son of hell.

Christ is holy, meek, and forbearing; antichrist is wicked, outrageous, and exacting.

Christ seeketh the good of the soul; antichrist seeks his own avarice and revenge.

Christ is content to rule by his word; antichrist saith the word is not sufficient.

Christ preferreth his Father's will above heaven and earth; antichrist preferreth himself and his traditions above all that is written, or that is called God or worshipped.

Christ has given us such laws and rules as are helpful and healthful to the soul; antichrist seeketh to abuse those rules to our hurt and destruction.

The spirit or soul or life of antichrist is that spirit of error, "that wicked," that "mystery of iniquity," that under color and pretence of verity draws men from truth to falsehood.

The body or flesh of antichrist is that church or syn-

agogue of Satan in which the spirit of antichrist dwells, or unto which the spirit of antichrist is become a soul and life.

But God will destroy both soul and body.

Antichrist therefore is a mystical man, so made or begotten of the devil, and sent into the world, Satan himself being the chief and highest part of him.

Three things therefore go to the making up of antichrist: the head, body, and soul. The devil, he is the head; the synagogue of Satan, that is the body; that wicked spirit of iniquity, that is the soul of antichrist.

Christ then is the head of his church, the devil is the head of antichrist; the elect are the body of Christ, the reprobate professors are the body of antichrist; the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of life that acteth Christ's body; that wicked spirit of iniquity is that which acteth the body of antichrist.

Thus therefore are the two great mighties set forth before us, who are the heads of those two bodies.

RISE AND PROGRESS OF ANTICHRIST.

The reason why Christ came into the world was, that he might destroy all the works of the head of antichrist, and them which he endeavors to complete by his wicked spirit working in his body. And the reason why antichrist came into the world was, that the church, which is the body of Christ, might be tried and made white by suffering under his tyranny, and by bearing witness against his falsehoods. For, for the trial of the faithful and for the punishment of the world, antichrist was admitted to come. But when he came, he first appeared where one would have thought there had been no place nor corner for his reception.

Here therefore was his first appearance, even in the church of God. Not that the church did willingly admit him there to sit as such; he had covered his cloven foot;

he had plums in his dragon's mouth, and so came in by flatteries, promising to do for Christ and his church that which he never meant to perform; for he showed himself that he was God, and in appearance set his heart to do as the heart of God.

And who could have found in their heart to shut the door upon such a one? True, he came, when he came thither, out of the bottomless pit; but there came such a smoke out thence with him, and that smoke so darkened the light of the sun, of the moon, of the stars, and of the day, that had they been upon their watch, as they were not, they could not have perceived him from another man. Besides, there came with him so many locusts to usher him into the house of God, and they so suited the flesh and reason of the godly of that day, that with good words and fair speeches, by their crafty and cunning sleights whereby they lay in wait to deceive, they quite got him in, and set him up and made him a great one, even the chief, before they were aware. Further, he quickly got him a beast to ride on, far, for sumptuous glory, beyond—though as to nature as assish a creature as—that on which Balaam was wont to ride; and by this exaltation he not only became more stately, but the horns of the beast would push for him.

Again, this man of sin, when he came into the world, had the art of metamorphosing, and could change himself, both in form and shape, into the likeness of a beast, a man, or woman.

A lily among thorns, a pearl on a dunghill, and beauty under a veil, will make one turn aside to look on it. Answerable to this, the church, even in the wilderness or under persecution, is compared not only to a woman, but to a comely and delicate woman. Thus the church, though in her weeds of widowhood, is become the desire of the eyes of the nations; for indeed her features are such,

considering who is her head, where mostly to the eye beauty lies, that whoso sees but the utmost glimpse of her is easily ravished with her beauties. The church, the very name of the church of God is beautiful in the world; and as among women, she that has beauty has her head desired, if it might be, to stand upon another woman's shoulders; so this and that and every nation that beholds the beauty of the church, would fain be called by that name.

The church, one would think, was but in a homely dress when she was coming out of captivity; and yet then the people of the countries desired to be one with her: "Let us," said they to Zerubbabel and to the fathers of the church, "build with you, for we seek your God as you do."

The very name of the church is striven for of the world; but that is the church which Christ has made so; her features also remain with herself. Hear the relation that the Holy Ghost gives of the intrinsic beauty of the church when she was to go to be in a persecuted state: "She was clothed with the sun, had the moon under her feet, and had upon her head a crown of twelve stars." And yet now the dragon stood by. But I say, here is a woman! Let any one who will attempt it show such another in the world if he can.

They therefore that have any regard to morality, civility, or to ceremonial comeliness, covet to be of the church of God, or to appropriate that glorious title to themselves.

And here indeed antichrist came in. She took this name to herself; and though she could not come at the sun, nor moon, nor stars, to adorn herself with them, yet she has found something that makes her comely in her followers' eyes. See how the Holy Ghost sets her forth: she was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand. Hence she is called the well-favored harlot, the lady of kingdoms.

But because the chaste matron, the spouse of Christ, would not allow this harlot to run away with this name, therefore she gets upon the back of her beast, and by him pushes this woman into the dirt; but because her faith and love to her husband remain, she turns again and pleads by her titles, her features, and ornaments, that she and she only is she whose square answereth to the characters which her Lord had given of his own; and so the strife began. For so soon as this mistress became a dame in the world, and found that she had her stout abettors, she attempts to turn all things topsy-turvy, and to set them and to make of them what she lists.

CORRUPTION OF THE CHURCH BY ANTICHRIST.

Mischief must needs follow this ugly deed of the man of sin. If a house be on fire, though it is not burnt down, the smell of the flame may long remain there: also we count it no wonder to see some of the effects upon rafters, beams, and some of the principal posts thereof. The calf that was set up at Dan defiled that people until the captivity of the land.

For by antichristian darkness, though they might call it light, the true light was darkened, and so the eye made dim, even the eye of the truly godly. Also the Holy Ghost did much withdraw himself from the church; so the doctrines, traditions, and rudiments of the world took more hold there, and spread themselves more formidably over the face of that whole church.

And this being the effect of light against light at first, is the cause of what to this day we see in the church among the true brotherhood. For as a cause produceth an effect, so oftentimes an effect sets on foot another cause. Witness the jars, the oppositions, the contentions, emulations, strifes, debates, whisperings, tumults, and condemnations, that like cannon-shot have so frequently on all sides been let fly against one another.

The godly all hold the Head; for there antichrist could never divide them. Their divisions therefore are only about smaller things.

I do not say that the antichristian darkness has done nothing in the church as to the hurting it in the great things of God. But I say, it has not been able to do that which could sever their Head from them. Otherwise, there appears even too much of its doings there. For even as to the offices of our Lord, some will have his authority more large, some more strait; some confine his rules to themselves and to their more outward signification, and some believe they are extended further; some will have his power in the church purely spiritual, others again would have it mixed; some count his word perfect and sufficient to guide in all religious matters, others again hold that an addition of something human is necessary.

This darkness could not sever the true church from her Head; yet it has eclipsed the glory of things. By two lights a man cannot see this or that thing so exactly as by one single light; no, they both make all confused, though they make not all invisible. As for instance, sunlight and moonlight together, firelight and sunlight together, candlelight and moonlight together, make things more obscure than to look on them by a single light. The word reflecting upon the understanding without the interposing of man's traditions, makes the mind of God to a man more clear than when attended with the other.

Things therefore will never be well in the church of God so long as there is thus light against light therein. When there is but one Lord among us, and his name one; and when divisions, by the consent of the whole, are banished—I mean, not persecuted, but abandoned in all by a joint consent, and when every man shall submit his own single opinion to those truths that by their being retained are for the health of all—then look for good days, and not till then.

CONFLICT BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND ANTI-CHRIST.

They that are the church do in God's light see light, but they that are not, do in their own way see. And let a man and a beast look out at the same window, the same door, the same casement, yet the one will see like a man, and the other but like a beast.

No marvel then if there is here a disagreement; the beast can but see as a beast, but the church is resolved not to be guided by the eye of a beast, though he pretends to have his light by that very window by which the church has hers. The beast is moon-eyed, and puts darkness for light, yea, and hates the light that is so indeed; but the saints will not hear him, for they know the voice of their Lord.

On both sides they are resolved to stand by their way: the church is confident, the man of sin is confident; they both have the same windows—that is, "the word"—to see by, and so they manage their matters; yet not so simply by the windows as by the diverse judgment they make of that which shineth in at them. Each one therefore that hath the true or false profession will be confident of his own way: he that was right, knew he was right; and he that was wrong, thought he was right; and so the battle began: "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Nor is it in man to help it: there has been reasoning, there has been disputing, there has blood also been spilt on both sides, through the confidence that each had of the goodness of his own way: but no reconciliation is made; the enmity is set here of God; iron and clay cannot mix; God will have things go on thus in the world till his word shall be fulfilled; the deceived and the deceiver are his. Things therefore must have their course in the church in the wilderness till the mystery of God shall be fulfilled. God will get to himself great glory by permitting the boar,

the man of sin and the dragon, to revel in the church of God; for they by setting up and contending for their darkness, and calling it the light, and by setting it against that light which is light in very deed, do not only prove the power of truth where it is, but illustrate it so much the more; for as black sets off white, and darkness light, so error sets off truth. He that calls a man a horse, doth but fix the belief of his humanity so much the more in the apprehension of all rational creatures.

It is not therefore to be wondered at that we hear both parties plead so much for their authority, crying out against each other as those that destroy religion. So doth the church, so doth the man of sin. The living child is mine, saith one. Nay, but the dead child is thine, and the living child is mine, says the other. And thus they spake before the king.

The church will not give place, for she knows she has the truth; the dragon and his angels, they will not give place, but as beaten back by the power of truth. Therefore there will, there must, there cannot but be a spiritual warfare here, and that until one of the two is destroyed, and its body given to the burning flame.

FALL OF ANTICHRIST.

Antichrist had a time to come into the world, and so must he have a time to go out again. For although he saith that he is a god, yet he must be subject to the will of God, and must go as well as come according to that will. Nor can all the fallen angels, with all the members and limbs of antichrist, cause this, that their brat should abide so much as one day longer than our God's prefixed time. The Lord Jesus shall consume him, and cause him to melt away; not all at once, but now this part and then that, now his soul and after that his body, even until soul and body are both destroyed.

And that you may be convinced of the truth of this

thing, do but look back and compare antichrist four or five hundred years ago, with antichrist as he is now, and you shall see what work the Lord Jesus has begun to make with him, even with the spirit and soul and life of antichrist, both in confounding and blasting it by the Spirit of his mouth, as also by forcing it to dishonorable retreats, and by making it give up to him as the conqueror, not only some of his superstitious and diabolical rites and ceremonies to be destroyed, but many a goodly truth which this vile one had taken from his church, to be renewed to them. Nay, further, he has also already begun to take from him both kingdoms and countries, though as to some not so absolutely as he shall do by and by.

And how has this long ago been fulfilled here in England, as also in Scotland, Holland, Germany, France, Sweden, Denmark, Hungary, and other places. Nor has this spirit of antichrist, with all his art and artifices, been able to reduce to antichrist again those people, nations, or parts of nations, that by the Spirit of Christ's mouth and the brightness of his coming have been made to forsake him, and to turn from him to Christ.

The reason is, that the Lord has not retreated, but is still going on in the Spirit of his mouth and in his brightness to make that conquest over him that is determined, in the way that is determined; for the pathway that he goeth is as the shining light which shines more and more unto noon.

The first and chief proceeding of the Lord with the man of sin is to slay his soul, that his body may also be consumed; and when the spirit of antichrist shall be made to leave both the body and ordinances of antichrist, it will be easy to deal both with the one and the other.

And first, for the ordinances of antichrist, because the spirit of error is in them as well as in the body itself. When that spirit has left them, they will of themselves even moulder away and not be; as we have seen by experience

here in England, and as others also have seen in other countries.

For as concerning his masses, prayers for the dead, images, pilgrimages, monkish vows, sinful fasts, and the beastly single life of their priests, though when the spirit of antichrist was in them they did bear some sway in the world, yet now of what esteem are they, or who has reverence for them? They are now blown together under hedges as the dry leaves, for the mice and frogs to harbor in. By ordinances of antichrist, I do not intend things that only respect matters of worship in antichrist's kingdom, but those civil laws that impose and enforce them also, yea, enforce that worship with pains and penalties, as in the Spanish inquisition.

These are the very pillars and sinews by which antichristianism remains; and were these dispirited, the whole building would quickly become a ruinous heap.

What could the king of Babylon's golden image have done, had it not been for the burning fiery furnace that stood within view of the worshippers? Yea, what could that horrible command to pray for thirty days to neither God nor man but to the king, have done, had it not been for the dark den and the roaring lions there in readiness to devour those that disobeyed it?

As therefore the burning fiery furnace and the den of lions were the support of the horrible religion of the Babylonians of old, so popish edicts are the support of the religion of antichrist now; and as long as there is spirit, that is, authority in them, they are like to those now mentioned. The spirit of such laws it is that makes them dreadful; for as the furnace would have been next to nothing if void of fire, and the den as little frightful if destitute of lions, so these laws will be as insignificant when Christ has slain the spirit that is in them—that spirit which causes that as many as will not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

MANNER OF ANTICHRIST'S DESTRUCTION.

Antichrist shall be brought to ruin gradually; a part after a part: here a fenced city and there a high tower, even until she is made to lie even with the ground.

As for the order of the angels that pour forth this wrath, they plainly show that this enemy must come down by degrees; for these vials are by them poured out one after another. Now, since by these vials antichrist must fall, it is evident that this man of sin, this son of perdition, is to fall and die by degrees. He would not die at all, as is manifest by his wrestling with it; but it is an almighty God that judges, and therefore he must come down. His friends also, with what cordials they can, will labor to lengthen out his tranquillity; but God hath set his bounds, and he cannot go beyond the time appointed.

We must also put a difference betwixt his being fought with and wounded, and that of his dying the death. Michael and his angels have been holding him in play a long season, but yet he is not dead; but, as I said, he shall descend into battle and perish, and shall be found no more for ever.

"And the cities of the nations fell," Rev. 16:19; the cities of the nations, the antichristian churches, otherwise called the daughters of the mother of harlots. This is a second stroke that God will give this man of sin, and a third cometh quickly.

Wherefore it follows, upon the downfall of those cities of the nations, that great Babylon came into remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. Now then, strike at great Babylon. Great Babylon! What is that? Why, I take it to be the mother, the metropolitan, the great harlot herself. For though sometimes by great Babylon we may understand the church of antichrist in general, yet by it is meant

more properly the mother of the daughters, of whose overthrow we have spoken before.

We are now, then, come to the threshold of the door of the house of the old one—to the door of the mother of harlots and abomination of the earth. This then that but now is said to come into remembrance with God, is that which gave being to the cities destroyed before, to wit, the ministers, the queen, the mother-church as she calls herself.

And this is the wisdom of God concerning her, that she should not be the first that should die, but that she should live to see the destruction of her daughters, and pine away under the fright and sense of that, even until judgment also shall overtake herself.

Thus Pharaoh and his chief ones did live to see the greatest part of Egypt destroyed, before judgment overtook them; but at last it came to their doors also. Zedekiah lived to see his children slain before his face, before judgment overtook him to his own personal destruction.

Babylon also, when God sent the cup of his fury unto her, yet was to live to see the nations drink before her.

From all which I conclude that the mother, the metropolitan, the lady of kingdoms, shall live to see her daughters executed before her face; after which, she shall come into consideration herself, for she must assuredly drink of the cup.

This destruction must be last for this reason also, because she most deserves the bottom of the cup. The bottom is the dregs, the most bitter part, and that where the most heat and fiercest wrath of God do lie. And great Babylon came into remembrance before God: "To give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."

Now then is the time of iniquity, when it will be come to the full; and now also is the time of God's anger, when it will be come to the full. Now therefore must the murders and thefts and blasphemies and fornications belonging to this mother of harlots, be recompensed to the full, to

wit, with the dregs of this cup. Yet since the hailstones come by weight and the wrath comes by measure—for so a talent and a cup imports, Rev. 16 : 17–21—it follows that the almighty God, even in the midst of the heat of all this anger, will keep to the rules of justice and judgment while he is dealing with this enemy : he has not passions to carry him beyond rules of judgment, nor weakness to cause him to fall short of doing justice ; therefore he has his judgments for her by weight, and his indignation by measure. But yet this weight and measure are not suited to her constitution, not with an intent to purge or refine her ; but it is disposed according to the measure and nature of her iniquity, and comes to sweep her as with the besom of destruction, until she is swept off from the face of all the earth.

Now since she is dying, let us ring her passing-bell ; for when she is dead, we that live to see it intend to ring out.

PRESENT STATE OF ANTICHRIST.

Now I saw in my dream, that at the end of this valley lay blood, bones, ashes, and mangled bodies of men, even of pilgrims that had gone this way formerly ; and while I was musing what should be the reason, I spied a little before me a cave, where two giants, Pope and Pagan, dwelt in old time ; by whose power and tyranny the men whose bones, blood, and ashes lay there, were cruelly put to death. But by this place Christian went without much danger, whereat I somewhat wondered ; but I have learnt since, that Pagan has been dead many a day ; and, as for the other, though he be still alive, he is, by reason of age, and also of the many shrewd brushes that he met with in his younger days, grown so crazy and stiff in his joints, that he now can do little more than sit in his cave's mouth, grinning at pilgrims as they go by, and biting his nails because he cannot come at them.

SLAYING OF THE WITNESSES.

Thus, as to sense and reason, all shall be hush, all shall be quiet and still, Rev. 11:7–15: the followers of the Lamb shall be down; the followers of the beast shall be up, shall cry, Peace and safety, and be as secure as a hard heart, false peace, and a deceitful devil can make them. But behold, while they thus sing in the window, death is striding over the threshold! While they are crying peace and safety, sudden destruction cometh. By that they have well settled themselves at their table with Adonijah, 1 Kings, 1, they shall hear it proclaimed with sound of trumpet, The witnesses are risen again.

Now the Christians' pipes will go again, and surely the earth will be rent with the sound of their shouts and acclamations, while they cry with joyful sound, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

REASONS FOR ANTICHRIST'S DESTRUCTION.

Antichrist must be destroyed, for that he has usurped the name and attributes of God upon himself. He hath said, I am God. For that antichrist has thus taken the place of God, prescribed and imposed a worship as a God, got the world to worship and wonder after him as after a God; therefore he shall die the death of the uncircumcised, both in the soul, spirit, body, or flesh of antichrist. Therefore will God enlighten and gather and set the kings and nations against him, that both he and his may be buried, and have their dolesome withdrawing-rooms from the world in the sides of the pit's mouth.

Antichrist must be destroyed, because he hath set himself against the Son of God; against the Father, and against the Son. He had a spite against the Son betimes, even then when he came forth but in little things, when he attempted to deny that He was come in the flesh. But seeing he could make no earnings of that, he has changed

his methods, and seeks to run him out and down by other means and ways. "Because, therefore, he hath set himself against the Son of God, the King, therefore he must die."

That he hath also set himself against the Son of God, is evident; for he has his name from thence: he is therefore called Anti-Christ.

That he hath set himself against Him, is yet further evident; for that he has endeavored to take from him his headship once, and his offices for and in the church, which is his body; and has called himself the head of the universal church of God.

Antichrist must be destroyed, because of his exceeding covetousness. Religion, such as it is, is the thing pretended to; but the great things of this world are the things really intended by him in all his seeming self-denials and devotions. And for this covetousness also it is that this destruction is to fall upon him. Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, (to his church,) that he may set his nest on high; for he could not do the one before he had obtained the other. For then indeed they began to be high, when they had so inveigled Constantine that he bestowed upon them much riches and honor; and then it was cried by an angel, and the cry was heard in the city of Constantinople, Woe! woe! woe! this day is venom poured into the church of God.

Nor has any generation, since the world began, been so insatiably greedy of gain, as these *poor* people have been. They have got kingdoms, they have got crowns, they have got—what have they not got? They have got every thing but grace and pardon. Did I say before that religion was their pretence? Doth not the whole course of their way declare it to their face? Every one of them, from the least even to the greatest, is given to covetousness; from the prophet even to the priest, every one dealeth falsely.

Money, money,* as the pedlar cries, "broken or whole," is the sinews of their religion; and it is for that they set kingdoms, crowns, principalities, places, preferments, sacraments, pardons, prayers, indulgences, liberty, yea, and souls and bodies of men, women, and children, to sale; yea, it is for this that they have invented so many places, offices, names, titles, orders, vows, etc.: it is to get money, to rob countries, that they may make their nests on high. And indeed they have done it, to the amazement of all the world. They are clambered up above kings and princes and emperors; they wear the triple crown; they have made kings bow at their feet, and emperors stand barefoot at their gates; they have kicked the crowns of princes from their heads, and set them on again with their toes. Thus their covetousness hath set them on high, even above the suns, moons, and stars of this world: but to what end? that they may be cast down to hell.

Antichrist must be destroyed, because he stands in the way of the setting up of the kingdom of Christ in the world. Many princes were in Edom before there was a king in Israel; and Christ has suffered antichrist to set up before him; and he stands in Christ's way, and has so overspread the world in all places with that which is directly contrary to him, that he cannot set up his kingdom until that which is antichrist's is tumbled down to the ground. Even as a man whose ground is full of thorns and briars and weeds, cannot sow in expectation of a crop, until he

* Similar is the testimony of an eminent historian. "In every misapplication which the popes now (thirteenth century) made of their power, money was the object. Every new operation which they performed, was one of extortion; and every new act of oppression was, on their part, a financial speculation." Planck. V. 574.

Says Luther, in his address to the German nobility, speaking of the pope, "He is a shepherd: yes, so far as you have money, and no farther." The above passage from Bunyan is altogether in the manner of Luther when describing the rapacity and avarice of Rome.

hath removed them. And these seeds has antichrist sown where the kingdom of Christ should stand.

When God came from Egypt with his people to set up his kingdom in Canaan, he cast out the heathen before them, in order thereunto: "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it." Wherefore antichrist must be removed and destroyed for this; for antichrist is in flat opposition to Christ, as Tibni was to Omri; wherefore antichrist must die.

The reason is, because Christ's kingdom shall be peaceable, without molestation, and glorious without the fumes and fogs of antichristian darkness. Because also, as the world has seen the manner of the reign of antichrist, and how tyrannical and outrageous a kingdom his is; so they shall see the reign of Christ by his word and Spirit in his people, how peaceable, how fruitful in blessedness and prosperity his kingdom is. And hence it is, that God purposes to bury antichrist before he sets glory in the land of the living; as also you read in the book of Revelation, for there you find the kingdom of antichrist was destroyed before the new Jerusalem was set up. When men intend to build a new house, if in the place where the old one stood, they first pull down the old one and raze the foundation, and then they begin their new. Now God, as I said, will have his primitive church-state set up in this world, even where antichrist has set up; wherefore, in order to this, antichrist must be pulled down, stick and stone; and then they that live to see it, will behold the new Jerusalem come down from heaven, as a bride adorned for her husband.

TIME OF ANTICHRIST'S DESTRUCTION.

The time of her fall is not certainly known by the saints, nor at all believed by her; wherefore her plagues must come unlooked for by her. And as to the saints, their guesses as to the time of her ruin must needs be con-

jectural and uncertain. For her part, she shall say, and that when she stands where she must suddenly fall, "I shall be a lady for ever."

Nor have I been without thought but that this mistake of the godly may become a snare to antichrist, and a trap to her upholders. For what can be a greater judgment, or more effectually harden the hearts of the wicked, than for them to behold that the predictions, prophecies, expectations, and hopes of their enemies as to their ruin, should quite, as to the time, be frustrate and made void?

It is to be bewailed, namely, the forwardness of some in this matter who have predicted concerning the time of the downfall of antichrist, to the shame of them and their brethren; nor will the wrong that such by their boldness have done to the church of God be ever repaired by them nor their works. But the judgments of God are a great deep; and therefore who can tell, since the enemy of God would not be convinced by the power of truth and the virtuous lives of some, but that God might leave them to be snared, hardened, and emboldened to run upon their unavoidable destruction by the lies and lightness of others? They begin to vaunt it already, and to say, Where is the word of the Lord as to this? let it come now. But when Agag said, "Surely the bitterness of death is passed," then was the time for him to be hewn in pieces.

I shall not therefore meddle with the times and seasons which the Father has put in his own power—no, though they, as to antichrist's ruin, are revealed—because by the Holy Ghost there is a challenge made, notwithstanding the time is set, and by the word referred to the man of wisdom to find it out if he can.

If Sampson's riddle was so puzzling, what shall we think of this? And though the angel hath intimated that this sealed matter shall be opened towards the time of the end, yet it is evident some have either been too hasty, or presumed too much upon their own abilities; for I am

sure they have missed the mark, hardened the heart of the enemy, stumbled the weak, and shamed them that love them.

SIGNS OF ANTICHRIST'S DESTRUCTION.

Forbearance is no payment: God's patience is not a sign that he forgetteth to take vengeance, but rather that he waiteth till his own are come out of her, and until her iniquity is filled up; for then he will execute the judgment written, and will remember the Babylonians and all their ways.

Must antichrist be destroyed? Then this should make us glad when we see the signs of his fall presenting themselves to our view. Indeed, the signs of his fall, or those that forerun it, are terrible and amazing to behold. But what of that, since the wrinkles that are in their faces threaten not us but them? A man is angry and will punish; yea, whets his sword and makes his rod; and he speaks not a word, but blood, blood is in it.

Indeed this should make them that are concerned in that anger afraid. But what terror is there in all this to those for the pleading of whose cause he is so angry with the other? Nothing whereat the innocent should be afraid.

Cold blasts in November are not received with such gentleness as are colder in March and April; for that these last cold ones are but the farewell notes of a piercing winter; they also bring with them the signs and tokens of a comfortable summer. Why, the church is now at the rising of the year; let then the blasts at present or to come be what they will, antichrist is surely drawing towards his downfall. And though the devil, knowing what is to be done to him and to his kingdom, shall so blind his disciples and fright the godly, and do something like it upon the church of Christ, yet we should look through

these paper windows, and espy in all this that fear, yea, certain terrible judgments, are following him at the heels, by which not only the soul, spirit, and life of antichrist, but the body thereof—yea, body and soul and head—are quickly to go down thither, from whence they, as such, shall not arise again. Amen.

HOPE OF ANTICHRIST'S DESTRUCTION.

Is antichrist to be destroyed? then let us live in the expectation of it; and let this be one of our songs in the house of our pilgrimage. God bids his people, while in Babylon, to let Jerusalem come into their mind; and writes to them that were then in her, to acquaint them that he remembered them still, and would assuredly deliver them from that place and state. And wherefore doth he thus, but to beget an expectation in them of their salvation and deliverance? The Lord is so pleased with the faith and expectation of his people as to this, that they seldom are herein concerned as they should, but he steps in with them and warms their hearts. The reason is, because the faith of God's people as to the downfall of Babylon, stands upon so sure a foundation as doth the salvation of their souls; and that next to that, God is as much delighted in what he has purposed to do against Babylon, as in any thing else in the earth: and therefore, if you consider it well, the great and glorious promises that are to be fulfilled on earth, are to be fulfilled when antichrist is dead and buried. These dainties are too good even for his children to have, so long as this dog is by, lest he should snatch at the crumbs thereof; wherefore they are reserved until he is gone. Jer. 19 : 31, 32.

EFFECTS OF ANTICHRIST'S DESTRUCTION.

It shall be done unto antichrist as he hath done to the church of God. As he hath made women childless, so shall he be made childless; as he has made Zion sit upon

the ground, so now must this wicked one come down to sit in the dust; yea, as he has made many churches desolations, so now shall he be also made a desolation. Wherefore, whoso will find his body, must look for it in the side of the pit's mouth; and whoso will find his friends and companions, must look for them there likewise.

Now then Babylon is gone down, when all these things shall be fulfilled. And what remains now but to talk of her as folk use to do of them that are dead; for the day will come, that the church of God shall have no more of antichrist, Babylon, or the mother of harlots, than only the remembrance of her; that there was such an enemy of God in the world; that there was such a superstitious, idolatrous, bloody people in the world. Wherefore, the people that shall be born, that shall live to serve God in these happy days, shall see antichrist only in its ruins; they shall, like the sparrows, the little robins, and the wren, sit and sing, and chirp one to another, while their eyes behold this dead hawk. Here, shall they say, did once the lion dwell; and there once a dragon inhabited: here did they live that were the murderers of the saints; and there another that did use to set his throat against the heavens: but now in the places where these ravenous creatures lay, grows grass, with reeds and rushes; now their habitation is cursed; nettles grow, and so do thorns and brambles, where their palaces were wont to be.

A day is coming when antichrist shall be unknown; not seen nor felt by the church of God. There are men to be born who shall not know antichrist, but as they read in the word that such a thing has been. These shall talk of her as Israel's children's children were to talk of Pharaoh—of his cruelty, of his tasks, of his pride, of the Red sea, and how he was drowned there. They shall talk of them as of those that have been long dead; as of those who, for their horrible wickedness, are laid in the pit's mouth.

This will be some of that sweet chat that the saints shall at their spare hours have, in time to come.

There will be a strange alteration when antichrist is dead; and that both in the church and in the world. The church and the members of it then shall wear the name of their God in their foreheads; that is, they shall be bold in the profession of their King and God, yea, it shall be their glory to be godly, and carnal men shall praise them for it; the praise of the whole earth shall the church of God be in those days. Now the world shall return and discern between the righteous and the wicked; yea, they shall cleave to and countenance the people of God, being persuaded, as Laban was of Jacob, that the Lord will bless them for his people's sake.

Now will be broken up those prophecies and promises that to this day lie as under lock and key, and that cannot be opened until they be fulfilled. Now the church of God shall read with great plainness the depths of providence, and the turnings and windings of all God's dark and intricate dispensations, through which she hath waded in the cloudy and dark day: now, I say, they shall see there was a harmony in them, and that, if one of them had been wanting, the work and way of her deliverance could not have been so full of the wisdom and justice and goodness of God. Wherefore now will that song be sung with clearer notes than ever: "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

WARNING AGAINST A RETURN TO ANTICHRIST.

Must antichrist be destroyed? Then what mean they who were to appearance once come out, but now are going thither again.

If it cost Lot's wife dear for but looking back, shall it not cost them much dearer that are going back, that are gone back again; and that after the angel had flown through the midst of heaven, preaching the gospel to those that dwell on the earth?

They that received the mark of the beast at first, before this angel came forth, are, when compared with these, excusable. Wherefore they are not threatened with the smoking wrath that these are.

You dread that which is like to become of them that will be so mad as to run into a house when fire is put to the gunpowder barrel in order to its blowing up. Why, thus do they, let their pretended cause be what it will, that are returning again to Babylon. Are her plagues pleasant or easy to be borne? Or dost thou think that God is at play with thee, and that he threateneth but in jest? Her plagues are death and mourning and famine and fire; are these things to be overlooked? And they that, as before hinted, shall receive the mark of the beast in their forehead or in their hand, and shall worship him, they shall drink the wine of the wrath of God. And will this be a delightsome draught?

FROM THE "INTRODUCTION TO THE HOLY CITY."

My fourth word is to the lady of kingdoms, the well-favored harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts and the abominations of the earth.

I suppose I have nothing here that will either please your wanton eye, or go down with your voluptuous palate. Here is bread indeed, as also milk and meat; but here is neither paint to adorn thy wrinkled face, nor crutch to uphold or undershore thy shaking, tottering, staggering kingdom of Rome; but rather a certain presage of thy sudden and fearful final downfall, and of the exaltation of that holy matron whose chastity thou dost abhor, because by it she reproveth and condemneth thy lewd and stubborn life.

Wherefore, lady, smell thou mayest of this, but taste thou wilt not. I know that both thy wanton eye, with all thy mincing brood that are intoxicated with thy cup and enchanted with thy fornications, will, at the sight of so homely and plain a dish as this, cry, Foh! will snuff, put the branch to the nose, and say, Contemptible! "But wisdom is justified of all her children." "The virgin-daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee;" yea, her God hath smitten his hands at thy dishonest gains and freaks. "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem and be glad with her, all ye that love her; rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her, that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory."

THE WOODEN CROSS.

Some have thought the altar to mean the cross on which the body of Christ was crucified when he gave himself an offering for sin; but they are greatly deceived, for he also himself was the altar through which he offered himself; and this is one of the treasures of wisdom which are hid in him, and of which the world and antichrist are utterly ignorant.

The altar is always greater than the gift, and since the gift was the body and soul of Christ—for so saith the scripture, "He gave himself for our sins"—the altar must be something else than a sorry bit of wood, or than the accursed tree.

Wherefore I will say to such, as one wiser than Solomon said to the Jews when they superstitiously magnified the gift, in counting it more honorable than the altar, "Ye fools and blind; for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?"

If the altar be greater than the gift, and yet the gift so great a thing as the very humanity of Christ, can it—I will now direct my speech to the greatest fool—can that greater

thing be the cross? Was the cross, the wooden cross, the cursed tree that some worship, greater than the gift, to wit, the sacrifice which Christ offered, when he gave himself for our sins? O idolatry! O blasphemy!

But what then was the altar?

The divine nature of Christ, that eternal Spirit, by and in the assistance of which "he offered himself without spot to God." "He through the eternal Spirit offered himself."

And it must be this, because, as was said, the altar is greater than the gift; but there is nothing but Christ's divine nature greater than his human. To be sure, a sorry bit of wood, a tree, the stock of a tree, is not.

It must be this, because the Scripture says plainly, the altar sanctifies the gift, that is, puts worth and virtue into it. But was it the tree, or the godhead of Christ, that put virtue and efficacy into this sacrifice that he offered to God for us? If thou canst but count thy fingers, judge.

Let the tree then be the tree, the sacrifice the sacrifice, and the altar the altar; and let men have a care how, in their worship, they make altars upon which, as they pretend, they offer the body of Christ; and let them leave off foolishly to doat upon wood and the works of their hands.

XXIV. DEATH.

SEEING man was taken from the ground, he is neither God nor angel, but a poor earthen vessel, such as God can easily knock in pieces and cause to return to the ground again.

And the time of need is the day of death, when I am to pack up all to be gone from hence, the way of all the earth. Now the greatest trial is come, except that of the day of judgment. Now a man is to be stripped of all but that which cannot be shaken. Now a man grows near the borders of eternity. Now he begins to see into the skirts of the next world. Now death is death, and the grave the grave indeed. Now he begins to see what it is for soul and body to part, and what to go and appear before God. Now the dark entry and the thoughts of what is in the way from a death-bed to the gate of the holy heaven, come nearer the heart than when health and prosperity do compass a man about.

Some men are cut off like the tops of the ears of corn, and some are even nipped by death in the very bud of their spring; but the safety is when a man is ripe, and shall be gathered to his grave as a shock of corn to the barn in its season.

DEATH OF THE SINNER.

Death is the axe which God often useth, therewith to take the barren fig-tree out of the vineyard, out of a profession, and also out of the world at once. But this axe is now new-ground; it cometh well edged to the roots of this barren fig-tree. It hath been whetted by sin, by the law, and by a formal profession, and therefore must and will make deep gashes, not only in the natural life, but in the

heart and conscience also of this professor. The wages of sin is death, the sting of death is sin. Wherefore, death comes not to this man as he doth to saints, muzzled, or without his sting, but with open mouth, in all his strength; yea, he sends his first-born, which is guilt, to devour his strength and to bring him to the king of terrors.

The dark entry which the barren professor is to go through will be a sore amazement to him, for "fears shall be in the way," yea, terrors will take hold on him when he shall see the yawning jaws of death gape upon him, and the doors of the shadow of death open to give him passage out of the world. Now, who will meet me in this dark entry? How shall I pass through this dark entry into another world?

There is no judgment to be made by a quiet death of the eternal state of him that so dieth. Suppose one man should die quietly, another should die suddenly, and a third should die under great consternation of spirit; no man can judge of their eternal condition by the manner of any of these kinds of death. He that dies quietly, suddenly, or under consternation of spirit, may go to heaven, or may go to hell; no man can tell whither a man goes by any such manner of death. The judgment, therefore, that we make of the eternal condition of man, must be gathered from another consideration, to wit, Did the man die in his sins? Did he die in unbelief? Did he die before he was born again? He that is a good man, a man that hath faith and holiness, a lover and worshipper of God by Christ, according to his word, may die in consternation of spirit; for Satan will not be wanting to assault good men upon their death-bed. But they are secured by the word and power of God, yea, and are also helped, though with much agony of spirit, to exercise themselves in faith and prayer; the which he that dieth in despair can by no means do.

DEATH OF THE CHRISTIAN.

Let dissolution come when it will, it can do the Christian no harm, for it will be but only a passage out of a prison into a palace; out of a sea of troubles into a haven of rest; out of a crowd of enemies to an innumerable company of true, loving, and faithful friends; out of shame, reproach, and contempt, into exceeding great and eternal glory.

Another improvement of Christ's death for us was this: by it he slew for us our infernal foes; by it he abolished death; by death he destroyed him that had the power of death; by death he took away the sting of death; by death he made death a pleasant sleep to saints, and the grave for a while an easy house and home for the body.

We change our drossy dust for gold;
From death to life we fly:
We let go shadows, and take hold
Of immortality.

Blood takes away the guilt; inherent grace weakens the filth; but the grave is the place, at the mouth of which sin and the saved must have a perfect and final parting. Not that the grave of itself is of a sin-purging quality, but God will follow Satan home to his own door, for the grave is the door or gate of hell, and will there, where the devil thought to have swallowed us up, even there by the power of his mercy, make us shine like the sun and look like angels.

THE CHRISTIAN WISHING TO DEPART.

"I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ." The strength of this desire is such that it is ready, so far forth as it can, to dissolve that sweet knot of union that is betwixt body and soul—a knot more dear to a reasonable

creature than that can be which is betwixt wife and husband, parent and child, or a man and his estate; for even all that a man hath will he give for his life, and to keep body and soul firmly knit together. But now, when this desire comes, this silver cord is loosed, is loosed by consent. This desire delightfully grants to him that comes to dissolve this union, leave to do it. "We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

The strength of this desire shows itself in this, that it is willing to grapple with the king of terrors, rather than to be detained from that sweet communion which the soul looks for when it comes into the place where its Lord is. Death is not to be desired for itself; the apostle chose rather to be clothed upon with his house which is from heaven, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

But yet rather than he would be absent from the Lord, he was willing to be absent from the body. Death, in the very thought of it, is grievous to flesh and blood; and nothing can so master it in our apprehensions as that by which we attain to these desires. These desires do deal with death, as Jacob's love to Rachel dealt with the seven long years which he was to serve for her. It made them seem few, or but a little time; so do these desires deal with death itself. They make it seem little, nay, a servant, nay, a privilege, because by that a man may come to enjoy the presence of his beloved Lord. I have a desire to depart, to go from the world and relations, to go from my body, that great piece of myself—I have a desire to venture the tugs and pains, and the harsh handling of the king of terrors, so I may be with Jesus Christ. These are the desires of the righteous.

Are not these therefore strong desires? Is there not life and mettle in them? Have they not in them power to loose the bands of nature, and to harden the soul against sorrow? Flow they not, think you, from faith of the finest

sort, and are they not bred in the bosom of a truly mortified soul? Are these the effect of a purblind spirit? Are they not rather the fruits of an eagle-eyed confidence? Oh, these desires! they are peculiar to the righteous.

Christ in glory is worth the being with. If the man out of whom the Lord Jesus cast a legion, prayed that he might be with him notwithstanding all the trials that attended him in this life, how can it be but that a righteous man must desire to be with him, now he is in glory?

To see Jesus Christ, to see him as he is, to see him as he is in glory, is a sight that is worth going from relations and out of the body and through the jaws of death to see; for this is to see him Head over all, to see him possessed of heaven for his church, to see him preparing mansion-houses for those his poor ones that are now by his enemies kicked to and fro like footballs in the world: and is not this a blessed sight?

Secondly, I have a desire to be with him, to see myself with him; this is more blessed still: for a man to see himself in glory, this is a sight worth seeing.

Sometimes I look upon myself and say, Where am I now? and do quickly return answer to myself again, Why, I am in an evil world, a great way from heaven, in a sinful body, among devils and wicked men; sometimes benighted, sometimes beguiled, sometimes fearing, sometimes hoping, sometimes breathing, sometimes dying. But then I turn the tables, and say, But where shall I be shortly? Where shall I see myself anon, after a few more times have passed over me? And when I can but answer this question thus: I shall see myself with Jesus Christ; this yields glory, even glory to one's spirit now.

Thirdly, I have a desire to be with Christ: there the spirits of the just are perfected; there the spirits of the righteous are as full as they can hold. A sight of Jesus in the word; some know how it will change them from glory to glory But how then shall we be changed and filled

when we shall see him as he is? "When he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

Moses and Elias appeared to Peter and James and John, at the transfiguration of Christ, "in glory." How so? Why, they had been in the heavens, and came thence with some of the glories of heaven upon them. Gild a bit of wood, yea, gild it seven times over, and it must not be compared, in difference from wood which is not gilt, with the soul that but a little while has been dipt in glory.

Glory is a strange thing to men that are on this side of heaven; it is that which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man: only the Christian has a word and Spirit that at times give a little of the glimmering thereof unto him.

But Oh, when he is in the Spirit and sees in the Spirit, do you think his tongue can tell? But if the sight of heaven at so vast a distance is so excellent a prospect, what will it be when one is in it?

No marvel, then, if the desires of the righteous are to be with Christ.

There is a man upon a bed of languishing; but Oh, he dares not die, for all is not as he would have it betwixt God and his poor soul; and many a night he lies thus in great horror of mind; but do you think that he doth not desire to depart? Yes, yes; he also waits and cries to God to set his desires at liberty. At last the visitor comes and sets his soul at ease, by persuading him that he belongs to God; and what then? Oh, Now let me die; welcome death!

THE DYING CHRISTIAN.

When men are faithful to God in this world, to do the work he hath appointed for them, by this means a dying bed is made easier.

1. By reason of that present peace such shall have, even in their time of languishing.

2. By reason of the good company such shall have at their departure. The angels of heaven shall wait upon them, as they did upon the blessed Lazarus, to carry them into Abraham's bosom. I know all that go to paradise are by these holy ones conducted thither; but yet, for all that, such as die under the clouds for unchristian walking with God, may meet with darkness in that day—may go heavily hence, notwithstanding that; yea, their bed may be as uncomfortable to them as if they lay upon nothing but the cords, and their departing from it, as to appearance, more uncomfortable by far.

But as for those who have been faithful to their God, they shall see before them; shall know their tabernacle shall be in peace; "the everlasting gates shall be opened unto them:" in all which from earth they shall see the glory of heaven.

DEATH OF MR. BADMAN'S WIFE.

ATTENTIVE. "And how did his good wife take it when she saw that he had no amendment, but that he returned to his old courses again?"

WISEMAN. "Why, it broke her heart; it was a worse disappointment to her than the cheat that he gave her in marriage; at least she laid it more to heart, and could not so well grapple with it. You must think that she had put up many a prayer to God for him before, even all the time that he had carried it so badly to her; and now when he was so affrighted in his sickness, and so desirous that he might live and mend, poor woman, she thought that the time was come for God to answer her prayers; nay, she did not fail with gladness to whisper out amongst her friends that it was so. But when she saw herself disappointed by her husband turning rebel again, she could not stand up under it, but fell into a languishing distemper, and in a few weeks gave up the ghost."

ATTENTIVE "Pray how did she die?"

Wiseman. "Die! she died bravely; full of comfort in the faith of her interest in Christ, and by him in the world to come. She had many brave expressions in her sickness, and gave to those that came to visit her many signs of her salvation. The thoughts of the grave, especially of her rising again, were sweet thoughts to her. She would long for death, because she knew it would be her friend. She expressed herself like one that was making herself ready to go to meet her bridegroom. 'Now,' said she, 'I am going to rest from my sorrows, my sighs, my tears, my mournings, and complaints: I have heretofore longed to be among the saints, but might by no means be suffered to go; but now I am going, and no man can stop me, to the great meeting, 'to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven.' There I shall have my heart's desire; there I shall worship without temptation or other impediment; there I shall see the face of my Jesus whom I have loved, whom I have served, and who now I know will save my soul. I have prayed often for my husband that he might be converted, but there has been no answer of God in that matter. Are my prayers lost; are they forgotten; are they thrown over the bar? No; they are hanged upon the horns of the golden altar, and I must have the benefit of them myself that moment that I shall enter into the gates, in at which the righteous nation that keepeth truth shall enter: I say, I shall have the benefit of them. I can say as holy David—I say, I can say of my husband as he could of his enemies, 'As for me, when they were sick, my clothing was of sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer returned into my bosom.' My prayers are not lost, my tears are yet in God's bottle; I would have had a crown and glory for my husband, and for those of my children that follow his steps; but so far as I can see yet, I must rest in the hope of having all myself.'

"When she drew near her end she called for her hus-

band, and when he was come to her, she told him that now he and she must part; and, said she, 'God knows, and thou shalt know, that I have been a loving, faithful wife unto thee; and as for all the abuses that I have received at thy hand, those I freely and heartily forgive, and still shall pray for thy conversion, even as long as I breathe in this world. But, husband, I am going thither where no bad man shall come; and if thou dost not turn, thou wilt never see me more with comfort. Let not my plain words offend thee; I am thy dying wife, and of my faithfulness to thee would leave this exhortation with thee: Break off thy sins, fly to God for mercy while mercy's gate stands open: remember that the day is coming when thou, though now lusty and well, must lie at the gates of death, as I do; and what wilt thou then do, if thou shalt be found with a naked soul to meet the cherubims with their flaming swords? Yea, what wilt thou then do if death and hell shall come to visit thee, and thou in thy sins and under the curse of the law?'

"When she saw that she was not regarded, she fetched a deep sigh and lay still. So he went down; and then she called for her children, and began to talk to them. And first she spoke to those that were rude, and told them the danger of dying before they had grace in their hearts. She told them also, that death might be nearer than they were aware of; and bid them look, when they went through the churchyard again, if there were not little graves there. 'And ah, children,' said she, 'will it not be dreadful to you, if we only shall meet at the day of judgment, and then part again and never see each other more?' And with that she wept; the children also wept. So she held on her discourse: 'Children,' said she, 'I am going from you. I am going to Jesus Christ; and with him there is neither sorrow nor sighing, nor pain nor tears, nor death: thither would I have you go also; but I can neither carry you nor fetch you thither. But if you shall turn from your sins to

God. and shall beg mercy at his hands by Jesus Christ, you shall follow me, and shall, when you die, come to the place where I am going, that blessed place of rest; and then we shall be for ever together, beholding the face of our Redeemer, to our mutual and eternal joy.' So she bade them remember the words of a dying mother when she was cold in her grave, and themselves were hot in their sins, if perhaps her words might put a check to their vice, and they might remember and turn to God.

"Then they all went down but her darling, to wit, the child that she had most love for, because it followed her ways.. So she addressed herself to that: 'Come to me,' said she, 'my sweet child, thou art the child of my joy; I have lived to see thee a servant of God; thou shalt have eternal life. I, my sweetheart, shall go before, and thou shalt follow after, if thou shalt hold the beginning of thy confidence steadfast to the end. When I am gone, do thou still remember my words. Love thy Bible, follow my ministers, deny ungodliness still, and if troublesome times shall come, set a higher price upon Christ, his word and ways, and the testimony of a good conscience, than upon all the world besides; carry it kindly and dutifully to thy father, but choose none of his ways.

"'I would have thee also, my dear child, to love thy brothers and sisters, but learn none of their naughty tricks; 'Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.' Thou hast grace; they have none. Do thou therefore beautify the way of salvation before their eyes, by a godly life and conversation conformable to the revealed will of God, that thy brothers and sisters may see and be the more pleased with the good ways of the Lord.'

"Thus she talked to her children and gave them counsel; and after she had talked to this a little longer, she kissed it and bid it go down.

"Well, in short, her time drew on, and the day that

she must die. So she died with a soul full of grace, a heart full of comfort, and by her death ended a life of trouble."

DEATH OF STANDFAST.

When Mr. Standfast had thus set things in order, and the time being come for him to haste him away, he went down to the river. Now there was a great calm at that time in the river; wherefore Mr. Standfast, when he was about half way in, stood a while and talked to his companions that had waited upon him thither: and he said, "This river has been a terror to many; yea, the thoughts of it also have often frightened me: now, methinks, I stand easy; my foot is fixed upon that on which the feet of the priests that bare the ark of the covenant stood, while Israel went over this Jordan.

"The waters indeed are to the palate bitter and to the stomach cold; yet the thoughts of what I am going to, and of the convoy that waits for me on the other side, doth lie as a glowing coal at my heart. I see myself now at the end of my journey; my toilsome days are ended. I am going to see that head that was crowned with thorns, and that face that was spit upon for me. I have formerly lived by hearsay and faith, but now I go where I shall live by sight, and shall be with him in whose company I delight myself. I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of; and whenever I have seen the print of his shoe in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too. His name has been to me as a civet-box, yea, sweeter than all perfumes. His voice to me has been most sweet, and his countenance I have more desired than they that have most desired the light of the sun. His words I did use to gather for my food, and for antidotes against my faintings. He has held me, and hath kept me from mine iniquities, yea, my steps have been strengthened in his way."

Now while he was thus in discourse, his countenance

changed; his "strong man bowed under him;" and after he had said, "Take me, for I am come unto thee," he ceased to be seen of them.

But glorious it was to see how the open region was filled with horses and chariots, with trumpeters and pipers, with singers and players on stringed instruments, to welcome the pilgrims as they went up, and followed one another in at the beautiful gate of the city.

DEATH OF CHRISTIAN AND HOPEFUL.

They then addressed themselves to the water, and entering, Christian began to sink, and crying out to his good friend Hopeful, he said, "I sink in deep waters; billows go over my head, all his waves go over me."

Then said the other, "Be of good cheer, my brother; I feel the bottom, and it is good."

Then said Christian, "Ah, my friend, the sorrow of death hath compassed me about. I shall not see the land that flows with milk and honey." And with that a great darkness and horror fell upon Christian, so that he could not see before him; also he in a great measure lost his senses, so that he could neither remember nor orderly talk of any of those sweet refreshments that he had met with in the way of his pilgrimage. But all the words that he spake still tended to discover that he had horror of mind, and heart-fears that he should die in that river and never obtain entrance in at the gate.

Here also, as they that stood by perceived, he was much in troublesome thoughts of the sins that he had committed both since and before he began to be a pilgrim. It was also observed that he was troubled with apparitions of hobgoblins and evil spirits; for ever and anon he would intimate so much by words.

Hopeful therefore here had much ado to keep his brother's head above water; yea, sometimes he would be quite gone down, and then, ere a while, he would rise up

again half dead. Hopeful did also endeavor to comfort him, saying, "Brother, I see the gate, and men standing by to receive us; but Christian would answer, "It is you, it is you they wait for; you have been hopeful ever since I knew you."

"And so have you," said he to Christian.

"Ah, brother," said he, "surely if I was right, he would now arise to help me; but for my sins he hath brought me into the snare, and hath left me."

Then said Hopeful, "My brother, you have quite forgot the text, where it is said of the wicked, 'There are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm: they are not troubled as other men, neither are they plagued like other men.' These troubles and distresses that you go through in these waters, are no sign that God hath forsaken you, but are sent to try you whether you will call to mind that which heretofore you have received of his goodness, and live upon him in your distresses."

Then I saw in my dream that Christian was in a muse a while To whom also Hopeful added these words: "Be of good cheer; Jesus Christ maketh thee whole."

And with that Christian broke out with a loud voice, "Oh, I see him again, and he tells me, 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.'"

Then they both took courage, and the enemy was after that as still as a stone until they were gone over. Christian therefore presently found ground to stand upon, and so it followed that the rest of the river was but shallow; thus they got over.

Now upon the bank of the river, on the other side, they saw the two shining men again, who there waited for them. Wherefore, being come out of the river, they saluted them, saying, "We are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those that shall be heirs of salvation." Thus they went along towards the gate.

BUNYAN'S DEATH.

FROM THE FIRST BIOGRAPHY OF BUNYAN.

"He comforted those that wept about him, exhorting them to trust in God, and pray to him for mercy and forgiveness of their sins; telling them what a glorious exchange it would be, to leave the troubles and cares of a wretched mortality to live with Christ for ever, with peace and joy inexpressible; expounding to them the comfortable scriptures by which they were to hope and assuredly come unto a blessed resurrection in the last day. He desired some to pray with him, and he joined with them in prayer; and his last words, after he had struggled with a languishing disease, were these: 'Weep not for me, but for yourselves. I go to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will, through the mediation of his blessed Son, receive me, though a sinner; where I hope we ere long shall meet to sing the new song, and remain everlastingly happy, world without end.'"

XXV. THE RESURRECTION.

THE doctrine of the resurrection, however questioned by heretics and erroneous persons, yet is such a truth, that almost all the holy scriptures of God point at and centre in it.

There is a poor dry and wrinkled kernel cast into the ground; and there it lieth, swelleth, breaketh, and, one would think, perisheth. But behold, it receiveth life, it chippeth, it putteth forth a blade, and groweth into a stalk. There also appeareth an ear; it also sweetly blossoms, with a full kernel in the ear. It is the same wheat; yet behold how the fashion doth differ from what was sown. And our *bran* will be left behind, when we rise again. The body ariseth, as to the nature of it, the self-same nature;

but as to the manner of it, how far transcendent! The glory of the terrestrial is one, and the glory of the celestial is another.

"It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." At our first appearance, the world will tremble. Behold, the gates of death and the bars of the grave are now carried away on our shoulders, as Sampson carried away the gates of the city. Death quaketh, and destruction falleth down dead at our feet. What then can stand before us? We shall then carry such grace, majesty, terror, and commanding power in our souls, that our countenances shall be as lightning. Then shall death be swallowed up of victory.

Glory is the sweetness, comeliness, purity, and perfection of a thing. The light is the glory of the sun, strength is the glory of youth, and gray hairs are the glory of old age. That is, it is the excellency of these things and that which makes them shine. Therefore to arise in glory, it is to arise in all the beauty and utmost completeness that is possible for a human creature to possess, in all its features and members inconceivably beautiful. Sin and corruption have made mad work in our bodies as well as in our souls; 'tis sin commonly that is the cause of all that deformity and ill-favoredness that now cleaveth to us, and that rendereth us so dishonorable at our death. But now at our rising, we shall be raised incorruptible; we shall appear in such perfection that all the beauty and comeliness, sweetness and amiableness that hath at any time been in this world, it shall be swallowed up a thousand times told with this glory.

The body when it ariseth will be so swallowed up of life and immortality, that it will be as if it had lost its own human nature. You know that things which are candied by the art of the apothecary, are so swallowed up

with the sweetness and virtue of that in which they are candied, that they are now as though they had no other nature than that in which they are boiled. Just thus, at the last day, it will be with our bodies. We shall be so candied by being swallowed up of life, that we shall be as if we were all spirit; when in truth, it is but this body that is swallowed up of life.

The body is also gathered up into glory, but not simply for its own sake, or because it is capable of itself to know and understand the glories of its Maker, but that it has been a companion with the soul in this world, and has also been its house, its mantle, its cabinet, and tabernacle here: it has also been that by which the soul hath acted, in which it hath wrought, and by which its excellent appearances have been manifested; and it shall also there be its copartner and sharer in its glory.

In this world the soul of the regenerate is a gracious soul; and in that world it shall be a glorious one. In this world the body was conformable to the soul as it was gracious, and in that world it shall be conformable to it as it is glorious. Yea, it shall have an additional glory to adorn and make it yet the more capable of being serviceable to and with the soul in its great acts before God in eternal glory.

If a man receive the mercy of the resurrection of the body, what a bundle of mercies will be received as wrapt up in that. He will receive perfection, immortality, heaven, and glory. And what is folded up in these things, who can tell?

As to the manner of the change of the body in its rising, this similitude also doth fitly suit: as, 1. It is sown a dead corn, it is raised a living one. 2. It is sown dry, and without comeliness; it riseth green and beautiful. 3. It

is sown a single corn, it riseth a full ear. 4. It is sown in the husk, but in its rising it leaveth that husk behind it.

Further, though the kernel thus die, be buried, and meet with all this change in these things, yet none of them can cause the nature of the kernel to cease; it is wheat still. Wheat was sown, and wheat arises; only it was sown dead, dry, and barren wheat, and riseth living, beautiful, and fruitful wheat. "God giveth it a body as it pleaseth him; but to every seed his own body."

All the glory that a glorified soul can help this body to, it at this day shall enjoy. That soul that has been these hundreds or thousands of years in the heavens, in the bosom of Christ, it shall in a moment come spangling into the body again, and inhabit every member and vein of the body, as it did before its departure. That Spirit of God also, that took its leave of the body when it went to the grave, shall now in all perfection dwell in the body again. I tell you, the body at this day will shine brighter than the face of Moses or Stephen, even as bright as the sun, the stars and angels. "When Christ who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory."

Christ has showed us what our body at the resurrection shall be, by showing us in his word what his body was at and after his resurrection. We read that his body after he was risen from the dead, though it yet retained the very same flesh and bones that did hang upon the cross, yet how angelical was it at all times, upon all occasions! He could come in to his disciples with that very body, when the doors were shut upon them. He could at pleasure, to their amazement, appear in the twinkling of an eye in the midst of them. He could be visible and invisible, as he pleased, when he sat at meat with them. In a word, he could pass and repass, ascend and descend in that body with far more pleasure and ease than the bird by the art of her wing.

Now I say, as we have in this world borne the image of our first father; so at that day we shall have the image of Jesus Christ, and be as he is. 1 Cor. 15 : 49.

To mount up to heaven, and to descend again with pleasure, shall with us in that day be ordinary. If there were ten thousand bars of iron, or walls of brass, to separate between us and our pleasure and desire at that day, they should as easily be pierced by us as is the cobweb, or as air by the beams of the sun. And the reason is, because to the Spirit, wherewith we shall be inconceivably filled at that day, nothing is impossible; and the working of it at that day shall be in such nature and measure as to swallow up all impossibilities. "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body"—now mark—"according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

Nay further, we do not only see what operation the Spirit will have in our body by the carriage of Christ after his resurrection, but even by many a saint before his death. The Spirit used to catch Elijah away, no man could tell whither. It carried Ezekiel hither and thither. It carried Christ from the top of the pinnacle of the temple into Galilee; through it he walked on the sea. The Spirit caught away Philip from the eunuch, and carried him as far as Azotus.

Thus the great God has given us a taste of the power and glory that are in himself, and how easily they will help us, by possessing us at the resurrection, to act and to do like angels; as Christ saith, "They that shall be counted worthy of that world and of the resurrection from the dead, they shall not die, but be equal to the angels."

SALVATION COMPLETE AT THE RESURRECTION.

"Now we shall see him," to wit, Christ in his glory. Not by revelation only, as we do now, but then face to face; and he will have us with him to this very end.

Though John was in the Spirit when he had the vision of Christ, yet it made him fall at his feet as dead; and also turned Daniel's beauty into corruption, it was so glorious and so overweighing a glory that he appeared in. But we shall at the day of our resurrection be so furnished, that we shall with the eagle be able to look upon the sun in his strength. We shall then "see Him as he is," who now is in the light that no eye hath seen, nor any man can see till that day.

Now we shall see into all things; there shall not be any thing hid from us. For the Spirit, with which we shall in every cranny of soul and body be filled, "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." We see what strange things have been known by the prophets and saints of God; and that when they knew but in part. Abraham could by it tell to a day how long his seed should be under persecution in Egypt. Elisha by it could tell what was done in the king of Assyria's bedchamber. Abijah by this could know Jeroboam's wife so soon as, yea, before her feet entered within his door, though he saw her not. The prophet of Judah could tell by this what God would do to Bethel for the idolatry there committed, and could also point out the man by name that should do the execution, long before he was born.

What shall I say? Enoch by it could tell what should be done at the end of the world. How did the prophets circumstantially prophesy of Christ's birth, his death, his burial, of their giving him gall and vinegar, of their parting his raiment and piercing his hands and feet, of his riding on an ass also. All this they saw when they spake of him. Peter also, though half asleep, could at the very first word call Moses and Elias by their names, when they appeared to Christ in the holy mount. He is very ignorant of the operation of the Spirit that scrupleth these things.

But now, I say, if these things have been done, seen, and known by spiritual men while their knowledge has

been but "in part," how shall we know, see, and discern, when "that which is perfect is come!" which will be at the resurrection: "It is raised a spiritual body."

Paul said to the Philippians that he was confident that he who had begun a good work in them, would perform it until "the day of Christ." Which day of Christ was not the day of their conversion, for that day was past with them already, they were now the children of God; but this day of Christ is the same which in other places is called the day when he shall come with the sound of the last trump to raise the dead. For you must know that the work of salvation is not at an end with them that are now in heaven; no, nor ever will be until their bodies be raised again. God has made our bodies the members of Christ, and God does not count us thoroughly saved, until our bodies be as well redeemed and ransomed out of the grave and death, as our soul from the curse of the law and dominion of sin.

Though God's saints have felt the power of much of his grace, and have had many a secret word fulfilled on them, yet one word will be unfulfilled on their particular person, so long as the grave can shut her mouth upon them. But when the gates of death do open before them, and the bars of the grave do fall asunder, then shall be brought to pass that saying which is written, "Death is swallowed up of victory." And then will they hear that most pleasant voice, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth her dead."

The body is no such ridiculous thing in the account of Christ as it was in the account of the Sadducees. "The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body;" and that not only in this world, but in that which is to come.

XXVI. THE JUDGMENT.

Oh my heart, it is in vain now to dissemble, or to hide, or to lessen transgressions; for there is a judgment to come, a day in which God will judge the secrets of men by his Son.

THE SAINTS JUDGED.

When the saints are raised, they must give an account of all things that they have done while they were in the world, of all things "whether they be good or bad."

1. Of all their bad. But mark, not under the consideration of vagabond slaves and sinners, but as sons, stewards, and servants of the Lord Jesus. "We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ;" we saints; "for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

It is true, God loveth his people; but yet he loveth not their sins, nor any thing they do, though with the greatest zeal for him, if it be contrary to his word. Wherefore, as truly as God will give a reward to his saints and children, for all that they have indeed well done, so truly will he at this day distinguish their good and bad; and when both are manifest by the righteous judgment of God, he will burn up their bad, with all their labor and travail in it, forever. He can tell how to save his people, and yet take vengeance on their inventions.

That is an observable place, 1 Cor. 3 : 12–15: "If any man build upon this foundation, (Christ,) gold, silver, precious-stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be manifest; for the day shall declare it; because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall abide that he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any

man's work shall be burned, that man shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire."

I am persuaded that there are many things done by the best of saints, which then they will gladly disown and be ashamed of; yea, they have and do still do this with great devotion. In many things now, we offend all; and then we shall see the many offences we have committed, and shall ourselves judge them as they are.

But yet take notice, that in this day when the saints are thus accounting for their evil before their Saviour and Judge, they shall not then, as now at the remembrance and confession of sin, be filled with that guilt, confusion, and shame, that now, through the weakness of faith, attend their souls: neither shall they in the least be grieved or offended that God has, before the angels and the rest of their holy brethren, laid open to a tittle their infirmities from the least and first to the biggest and last.

For the God to whom they confess all, they will now more perfectly than ever see he doth love them and free them from all, even when and before they confess and acknowledge them to him; and they shall have their soul so full of the ravishing raptures of the life and glory that now they are in, that they shall be of it swallowed up in that measure and manner that neither fear, nor guilt, nor confusion can come near them or touch them. Their Judge is their Saviour, their husband, and head; who, though he will bring every one of them for all things to judgment, yet will keep them for ever out of condemnation. Perfect love casteth out fear, even while we are here; much more then when we are with the Saviour, our Jesus, being passed from death to life.

SAINTS REWARDED AT THE JUDGMENT.

Now the saved having accounted for all their evil, and confessed to God's glory how they fell short and did not the truth in this or that particular, and having received their

eternal acquittance from the Lord and Judge, in the sight of both angels and saints, forthwith the Lord Jesus will make inquiry into all the good and holy actions they do in the world. Now here shall all things be reckoned up, from the very first good thing that was done by Adam or Abel, to the last that will fall out to be done in the world—the good of all the holy prophets, of all apostles, pastors, teachers, and helps in the church—here also will be brought forth to light all the good deeds of masters of families, of parents, of children, of servants, of neighbors, or whatever good things any man doeth.

1. Here will be a recompense for all that have labored sincerely in the word and doctrine. Now shall Paul the planter, and Apollos the waterer, with every one of their companions, receive the reward that is according to their works.

Now all the preaching, praying, watching, and labor thou hast been at, in thy endeavoring to catch men from Satan to God, shall be rewarded with spangling glory. Not a soul thou hast converted to the Lord Jesus, not a soul thou hast comforted, strengthened, or helped by thy wholesome counsel, admonition, and comfortable speech, but it shall stick as a pearl in that crown which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give thee at that day; that is, if thou doest it willingly, delighting to lift up the name of God among men; if thou doest it with love, and longing after the salvation of sinners: otherwise thou wilt have only thy labor for thy pains, and no more. If I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed to my charge.

But if thou do it graciously, then a reward followeth; "for what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye," says Paul, "in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy."

Let him therefore that Christ has put into his harvest, take comfort in the midst of all his sorrows; and know

that God acknowledges that he that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, doth even save that soul from death, and covereth a multitude of sins. Wherefore, labor to convert, labor to water, labor to build up and to feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

2. And as the ministers of Christ's gospel shall at this day be recompensed, so shall also those more private saints be with tender affections and love looked on and rewarded for all their work and labor of love which they have showed to the name of Christ, in ministering to his saints and suffering for his sake. "Whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free."

Ah, little do the people of God think how largely and thoroughly God will at that day own and recompense all the good and holy acts of his people. Every bit, every drop, every rag, and every night's harbor though but in a wisp of straw, shall be rewarded in that day before men and angels: "Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you," saith Christ, "he shall in no wise lose his reward." "Therefore, when thou makest a feast," saith he, "call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

If there be any repentance among the godly at that day, it will be because the Lord Jesus, in his person, members, and word, was no more owned, honored, entertained, and provided for by them, when they were in this world; for it will be ravishing to all to see what notice the Lord Jesus will then take of every widow's mite. He will call to mind

even all those acts of mercy and kindness which thou hast showed to him when thou wast among men. He will remember, cry up, and proclaim before angels and saints those very acts of thine which thou hast either forgotten or through bashfulness wilt not at that day count worth the owning. He will reckon them up so fast and so fully that thou wilt cry, "Lord, when did I do this, and when did I do the other? When saw we thee hungry and fed thee, or athirst and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in, or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick or in a prison, and came unto thee?" And the King shall answer and say unto them, "Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me. The good works of some are manifest beforehand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid. Whatever thou hast done to one of the least of these my brethren, thou hast done it unto me. I felt the nourishment of thy food and the warmth of thy fleece; I remember thy loving and holy visits, when my poor members were sick and in prison and the like. When they were strangers and wanderers in the world, thou tookest them in. Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

3. Here also will be a reward for all that hardness and Christian enduring of affliction that thou hast met with for thy Lord, while thou wast in the world. Here now will Christ begin from the greatest suffering even unto the least, and bestow a reward on them all, from the blood of the suffering saint to the loss of a hair.

4. There is also a reward at this day for all the more secret and more retired works of Christianity. 1. There is not now one act of faith in thy soul, either upon Christ or against the devil and antichrist, but it shall in this day be found out, and praised, honored, and glorified in the face of heaven. 2. There is not one groan to God in secret against thy own lusts, and for more grace, light, Spirit, sanctifica-

tion, and strength to go through this world like a Christian, but it shall even at the coming of Christ be rewarded openly. 3. There has not one tear dropped from thy tender eye against thy lusts, the love of the world, or for more communion with Jesus Christ, but as it is now in the bottle of God, so then it shall bring forth such plenty of reward, that it shall return upon thee with abundance of increase. "Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh." "Thou tellest my wanderings and puttest my tears in thy bottle; are they not in thy book?" "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

If thou indeed and in truth close in with Jesus, thou shalt be lovingly received and tenderly embraced of Christ at that day, when he hath thousands of noble saints, as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, with all the prophets, apostles, and martyrs, attending on him; and many thousands of glittering angels ministering before him. When the ungodly shall appear there, with their pale faces, with their guilty consciences and trembling souls—who would then give thousands of worlds, if they had so many, if they could enjoy but one loving look from Christ—then shalt thou have the hand of Christ reached to receive thee, saying, Come, thou blessed, step up hither; thou wast willing to leave all for me, and now I will give all to thee. Here is a throne, a crown, a kingdom; take them. Thou wast not ashamed of me when thou wast in the world among my enemies, and now will not I be ashamed of thee before thine enemies, but will, in the view of all these devils and damned reprobates, promote thee to honor and dignity. Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Thou shalt see that those who have served me in truth shall lose nothing, but they shall be as pillars in my temple and

inheritors of my glory, and shall have place to walk in among my saints and angels. Oh, who would not be in this condition? who would not be in this glory?

At the day of judgment, Israel will be sufficiently weary of this world; they will even as it were inexpressibly groan to be taken up from hence: wherefore the Lord will come, as making use of the weariness and groaning of his people, and will take them up into his chambers of rest, and will wipe away all tears from their eyes.

That we are justified in the sight of the divine Majesty by free grace, through that one offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all, I bless God I believe it; and that we shall be brought to glory by the same grace, through the same most blessed Jesus, I thank God I believe that also. Again, that the glory to which we shall be brought by free grace through the only merits of Jesus, is unspeakably glorious and complete, I question no more than I question the blessed truths but now confessed.

But notwithstanding all this, there is a reward for the righteous, a reward for their works of faith and love, whether in a doing or in a suffering way, and that not principally to be enjoyed here, but hereafter: "Great is your reward in heaven."

Paul was as great a maintainer of the doctrine of God's free grace, and of justification from sin by the righteousness of Christ imputed by grace, as any one that ever lived in Christ's service from the world's beginning till now; and yet he was for this doctrine: he expected himself, and encouraged others also to look for such a reward for doing and suffering for Christ, which he calls "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Surely, as Christ says in a case not distant from this in hand, "If it were not so, he would have told us."

Wherefore a reward I find, and that laid up in heaven;

but what it is I know not, neither is it possible for any here to know it any further than by certain general words of God, such as these: "Praise, honor, glory, a crown of righteousness, a crown of glory, thrones, judging of angels, a kingdom, with a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Wherefore, though in the day of judgment thou shouldst there slight all thou didst on earth for thy Lord, saying, "When, Lord, when did we do it?" he will answer, "Then, even then when ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

SINNERS JUDGED.

"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." For as the just go before the unjust in name and dignity and honor, so they shall, in the last day, go before them in the resurrection.

Now then, when the saints have risen out of their graves, given up their accounts, received their glory, and are set upon their thrones—when they are all of them in their royal apparel, with crowns of glory, every one presenting the person of a king, then come the unjust out of their graves, to receive their judgment for what they have done in the body. "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one," both saints and sinners, "may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

"And the windows," or floodgates, "of heaven were opened." This opening of the floodgates of heaven was a type of the way that shall be made for the justice of God upon ungodly men, when Christ has laid aside his mediatorship; for he indeed is the sluice that stops this justice of God from its dealing according to its infinite power and severity with men. He stands like Moses, and as it were holdeth the hands of God. Oh, but when he shall be

taken away, when he shall have finished his mediatorial work, then will the floodgates of heaven be opened, and then will the justice and holiness of God deal with men without stint or diminution, even till it has filled the vessels of wrath with vengeance till they run over. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,"

The Judge is the almighty and eternal God: the law broken is the holy and perfect rule of God, in itself a consuming fire: sin is so odious, and a thing so abominable, that it is enough to make all the angels blush to hear it but so much as once mentioned in so holy a place as that is, where the great God doth sit to judge. This sin now hangs about the neck of him that has committed it, yea, it covers him as doth a mantle.

Doubtless before the flood had carried off the ark, others besides would with gladness have had there a lodging-room, though no better than a dog-kennel; but now it was too late, "The Lord had shut the door."

As the just shall rise in power, so the wicked and unjust in weakness and astonishment. Sin and guilt bring weakness and faintness in this life; how much more when both, with all their force and power, like a giant fasten on them? As God saith, "Can thy hands be strong, and can thy heart endure in the day that I shall deal with thee?" Now will the ghastly jaws of despair gape upon thee, and now will condemnings of conscience, like thunderclaps, continually batter against thy weary spirit. It is the godly that have boldness in the day of judgment; but the wicked will be like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Now when the wicked are thus raised out of their graves, they shall, together with all the angels of darkness, their fellow-prisoners, be brought up, being shackled

in their sins, to the place of judgment; where there shall sit upon them Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Lord Chief-judge of things in heaven, and earth, and things under the earth. On whose right hand and left shall sit all the princes and heavenly nobles, the saints and prophets, the apostles and witnesses of Jesus; every one in his kingly attire upon the throne of his glory. Then shall be fulfilled that which is written, "But those my enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me."

When every one is thus set in his proper place, the Judge on his throne with his attendants, and the prisoners coming up to judgment, forthwith there shall issue forth a mighty fire and tempest from before the throne, which shall compass it round about. Which fire shall be as bars and bounds to the wicked, to keep them at a certain distance from the heavenly Majesty. "Our God will come and not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." "His throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels like burning fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him."

This preparation being made—to wit, the Judge with his attendants on the throne, the bar for the prisoners, and the rebels all standing with ghastly faces to look for what comes after—presently the books are brought forth, the books both of death and life, and every one of them opened before the sinners now to be judged and condemned; for after that he had said, "A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him," he adds, "Thousands, thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The judgment was set, and the book was opened." And again, "I saw a great white throne and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no more place for them; and I saw the dead, small and great, stand be-

fore God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged out of the things that were written in the books, according to their works."

"For many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." They will put on all the confidence they can; they will trick and trim up their profession, and adorn it with what bravery they can. Thus the foolish virgins sought to enter in; they did trim up their lamps, and made themselves as fine as they could. They made shift to make their lamps to shine a while; but the Son of God discovering himself, their confidence failed, their lamps went out, the door was shut upon them, and they were kept out.

They will make a stop at this gate, this beautiful gate of heaven; they will begin to stand without at the gate, as being loath to go any further. Never did malefactor so unwillingly turn off the ladder when the rope was about his neck, as these will turn away in that day from the gates of heaven to hell.

It may be that when thou hearest that the dust of the street, that cleaveth to a minister of the gospel while thou rejectest his word of salvation, shall be a witness against thee at the day of judgment, thou wilt be apt to laugh, and say, The dust a witness! witnesses will be scarce when dust is forced to come in to plead against a man.

Well, sinner, mock not; God doth use to confound the great and mighty by things that are not, and that are despised.

When once the master of the house is risen up, that is, when Christ hath laid aside his mediation for sinners, and hath taken upon him only to judge and condemn, then

will the wicked begin to stand without, and to knock and contend for a portion among them that are blessed. Ah, how will their hearts twitter while they look upon the kingdom of glory! And how will they ache and throb at every view of hell, their proper place; still crying, O that we might inherit life, and O that we might escape eternal death!

Thus you see how loath the sinner is now to take a nay of life everlasting. He that once would not be persuaded to close with the Lord Jesus, though one should have persuaded him with tears of blood, behold how fast he now hangs about the Lord: what arguments he frames with mournful groans; how with shifts and words he seeks to gain time, and to defer the execution. "Lord, open unto us! Lord, Lord, open unto us! Lord, thou hast taught in our streets, and we have both taught in thy name, and in thy name have we cast out devils. We have eat and drank in thy presence. And when did we see thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to thee?" O, poor hearts; how loath, how unwillingly do they turn away from Christ; how loath are they to partake of their ungodly doings! Christ must say, "Depart," once, and "Depart," twice, before they will depart. When he hath shut the door upon them, yet they knock, and cry, "Lord, open unto us:" when he hath given them their answer, that he knows them not, yet they plead and mourn. Wherefore, he is fain to answer again, "I tell you, I know you not whence you are; depart."

O this word, depart, how dreadful is it; with what weight will it fall on the head of every condemned sinner! For you must note, that while the ungodly stand thus before the Judge, they cannot choose but have a most distinct view both of the kingdom of heaven, and of the damned spirits in hell. Now they see the God of glory, the King

of glory, the saints of glory, and the angels of glory; and the kingdom in which they have their eternal abode. Now they also begin to see the worth of Christ and what it is to be smiled upon by him, from all which they must depart; and as I say they shall have the view of this, so they will most clearly behold the pit, the bottomless pit, the fire, the brimstone, and the flaming beds that justice hath prepared for them of old.

At the day of judgment, will be tried whether thou art within that part of the book of life wherein all the elect are recorded; for all the elect are written here, as Christ saith, "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Now then, if thy name be not found either among the prophets or apostles or the rest of saints, thou must be put by as one that is cast away, as one polluted, and as an abominable branch. Thy name is wanting in the genealogies and rolls of heaven; thou art not marked for everlasting life; therefore thou must not be delivered from that soul-amazing misery: for there are no souls can, though they would give a thousand worlds, be delivered at the day of God, but such that are found written in this book. Every one of those that are written, though never a one of those that are not written, shall in that day be delivered from the wrath to come.

But O methinks, with what careful hearts will the damned now begin to look for their names in this book. Those that, when once the long-suffering of God waited on them, made light of all admonition, and slighted the counsel of making their calling and election sure, would now give thousands of treasures, that they could but spy their names, though last and least among the sons of God. But, I say, how will they fail; how will they faint; how will they die and languish in their souls, when they shall still, as they look, see their names wanting! What a pinch will it be to Cain, to see his brother there recorded, and

he himself left out. Absalom will now swoon and be as one that giveth up the ghost, when he shall see David his father, and Solomon his brother written here, while he withal is written in the earth, among the damned. Thus, I say, will sadness be added to sadness in the soul of the perishing world, when they fail of finding their names in this part of the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

SINNERS WITHOUT EXCUSE AT THE JUDGMENT.

Observe, that among all the objections and cavils that are made and will be made by the ungodly in the day of the Lord Jesus, they have not one about election, and reprobation: they murmur not at all that they were not predestinated to eternal life; and the reason is, because then they shall see, though now they are blind, that God could in his prerogative royal, without prejudice to them that are damned, choose and refuse at pleasure; and besides, they at this day shall be convinced that there was so much reality, and downright willingness in God, in every tender of grace and mercy to the worst of men, and also so much goodness, justness, and reasonableness in every command of the gospel of grace, which they were so often entreated and beseeched to embrace, that they will be drowned in the conviction of this, that they did refuse love, grace, and reason—love, I say, for hatred, grace for sin, and things reasonable for things unreasonable and vain. Now they shall see they left glory for shame, God for the devil, heaven for hell, light for darkness. Now they shall see, that though they made themselves beasts, yet God made them reasonable creatures; and that he did with reason expect that they should have adhered to, and have delighted in, things that are good and according to God. Yea, now they shall see and be convinced, that though God did not determine to bring them to heaven against their hearts and wills, and the love that they had to

their sins, yet that God was far from infusing any thing into their souls, that should in the least hinder, weaken, obstruct, or let them in seeking the welfare of their souls. Now, men will tattle and prattle at a mad rate about election and reprobation, and conclude that because all are not elected, therefore God is to blame that any are damned. But then they will see that they are not damned because they were not elected, but because they sinned; and also, that they sinned, not because God put any weakness into their souls, but because they gave way, and that wilfully, knowingly, and desperately, to Satan and his suggestions; and so turned away from the holy commandment delivered unto them. Yea, then they will see, that though God at some times did fasten his cords about their heads and heels and hands, both by godly education and smarting convictions, yet they rushed away with violence from all, saying, "Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us." God will be justified in his sayings, and clear when he judgeth; though men's proud ignorance thinks to have and to multiply cavils against him.

Now shall be brought before thee and all men, how many strugglings God had with thy heart, on the sick-bed, to do thee good; yea, and at such times, how many vows, promises, engagements, and resolutions thou madest before God to turn, if he would release thee from thy affliction and turn off his rod from thy back; and yet how thou didst, like the man possessed, break and snap in twain all these chains of iron with which thou hadst bound thy soul; and that for a very lust or sin. Here also will be opened before thee how often thou hast sinned against thy light and knowledge; how often thou hast laid violent hands on thy own conscience; how often thou hast labored to put out that light that hath stood in thy way to hinder thee from sinning against thy soul. Ah, Lord, what a condition will the Christless soul be in at that day; how will every

one of these things afflict the damned soul! they will pierce like arrows, and bite like serpents, and sting like an adder. With what shame will that man stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, who must have all things he hath done against God to provoke the eyes of his glory to jealousy, laid open before the whole host of the heavenly train. It would make a man blush to have his pockets searched for things that are stolen, in the midst of a market, especially if he stand upon his reputation and honor. But thou must have thy heart searched, the bottom of thy heart searched; and that, I say, before thy neighbor whom thou hast wronged, and before the devils whom thou hast served; yea, before God whom thou hast despised, and before the angels, those holy and delicate creatures, whose holy and chaste faces will scarce forbear blushing.

"IGNORANCE" CONDEMNED AT THE JUDGMENT.

While I was gazing at all these things, I turned my head to look back, and saw Ignorance come up to the river-side; but he soon got over, and that without half the difficulty which the other two men met with. For it happened that there was then in that place one Vain-hope, a ferry-man, that with his boat helped him over. So he, as the others I saw, did ascend the hill to come up to the gate; only he came alone, neither did meet with any the least encouragement. When he was come up to the gate, he looked up to the writing that was above, and then began to knock, supposing that entrance should have been quickly administered to him; but he was asked by the men that looked over the top of the gate, "Whence come you? and what would you have?" He answered, "I have eat and drank in the presence of the King, and he has taught in our streets." Then they asked him for his certificate, that they might go in and show it to the King. So he fumbled in his bosom for one, and found none. Then said they, "Have you none?" But the man answered never a word.

So they told the king; but he would not come down to see him, but commanded the two shining ones that conducted Christian and Hopeful to the city, to go out and take Ignorance, and bind him hand and foot, and have him away. Then they took him up and carried him through the air to the door that I saw in the side of the hill, and put him in there. Then I saw that there was a way to hell even from the gates of heaven, as well as from the city of Destruction.

XXVII. HEAVEN.

HAPPINESS AND GLORY OF HEAVEN.

HEAVEN! It is called the paradise of God—a paradise, to show how quiet, harmless, sweet, and beautiful heaven shall be to them that possess it.

"The street of the city was pure gold." All the visions were rich, but this the richest, that the floor of the house should be covered with gold. The floor and street are walking-places, and how rich will our steps be then! Alas, here we sometimes step into the mire, and then again stumble upon blocks and stones. Here we sometimes fall into the holes, and have our heel often catched in a snare; but there will be none of these. Gold! gold! all will be gold, and golden perfections, when we come into the holy place.

If a sight of sin and the love of God will make such work in that soul where yet there is unbelief, blindness, mistrust, and forgetfulness; what will a sight of sin do in that soul which is swallowed up of love, which is sinless and temptationless, which hath all faculties of soul and

body strained by love and grace to the highest pin of perfection that is possible to be in glory enjoyed and possessed?

O the wisdom and goodness of God, that he at the day of judgment should so cast about the worst of our things, even those that naturally tend to sink us and damn us, for our great advantage. All things shall work together for good, indeed, to them that love God. Those sins that brought a curse upon the whole world, that spilt the heart-blood of our dearest Saviour, and that laid his tender soul under the flaming wrath of God, shall, by his wisdom and love, tend to the exaltation of his grace, and the inflaming of our affections to him for ever and ever.

These visions, that the saved in heaven shall have of the love of Christ, will far transcend our utmost knowledge here; even as far as the light of the sun at noon goes beyond the light of a blinking candle at midnight.

As there are great saints and small ones in the church on earth, so there are angels of divers degrees in heaven; some greater than some; but the smallest saint, when he gets to heaven, shall have an angel's dignity, an angel's place.

What goodly mansions He for them provides,
Though here they meet rough winds and swelling tides;
How brave a calm they will enjoy at last,
Who to the Lord and to his ways hold fast.

EMPLOYMENTS OF HEAVEN.

This love of Christ, if I may so say, will keep the saints in an employ, even when they are in heaven; though not an employ that is laborsome, tiresome, burdensome, yet an employ that is dutiful, delightful, and profitable; for although the work and worship of saints in heaven is not

particularly revealed as yet, and so it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet in the general we may say, there will be that for them to do that has not yet by them been done; and by that work which they shall do there, their delight will be unto them. Nor will this at all derogate from their glory. The angels now wait upon God, and serve him; the Son of God is now a minister, and waiteth upon his service in heaven. Some saints have been employed about service for God after they have been in heaven; and why we should be idle spectators when we come thither, I see not reason to believe. It may be said, They there rest from their labors. True, but not from their delights. All things then that once were burdensome, whether in suffering or service, shall be done away, and that which is delightful and pleasurable shall remain.

Now, just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and behold, the city shone like the sun; the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal. There were also of them that had wings; and they answered one another without intermission, saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord." And after that they shut up the gates; which when I had seen, I wished myself among them.

"Strive to enter in." "Enter in"—into heaven, that is the meaning, where the saved are and shall be—into heaven, that place, that glorious place where God and Christ and angels are, and the souls of just men made perfect. "Enter in:" that thing included though not expressed in the words, is called in another place the "mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven." And

therefore the words signify unto us that there is a state most glorious, and that when this world is ended; and that this place and state is likewise to be enjoyed by a generation of men for ever. Besides, this word "enter in" signifies that salvation to the full is to be enjoyed only there, and that there only is eternal safety; all other places and conditions are hazardous, full of snares, imperfections, temptations, and afflictions. But there all is well; there is no devil to tempt, no desperately wicked heart to deliver us up, no deceitful lust to entangle, nor any enchanting world to bewitch us; there all shall be well to all eternity. Further, all the parts of and circumstances that attend salvation, are only there to be enjoyed: there only is immortality and eternal life; there is the glory and fulness of joy and the everlasting pleasures; there is God and Christ to be enjoyed by open vision; and more, there are the angels and the saints; there is no death nor sickness, no sorrow nor sighing for ever; there is no pain, nor persecution, nor darkness to eclipse our glory. O this mount Zion! O this heavenly Jerusalem!

SOUL AND BODY GLORIFIED IN HEAVEN.

"When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass that saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

So when this comes to pass, then we shall be saved, then will salvation in all the parts of it meet together in our glory, then we shall be every way saved: saved in God's decree, saved in Christ's undertakings, saved by faith, saved in perseverance, saved in soul, and in body and soul together, in the heavens; saved perfectly, everlastingly, gloriously.

I would discourse a little of the state of our body and soul in heaven, when we shall enjoy this blessed state of salvation.

1. Of the soul. It will then be filled in all the faculties of it with as much bliss and glory as ever it can hold.

The understanding will then be perfect in knowledge. "Now we know in part"—we know God, Christ, heaven, and glory, but in part; "but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." Then shall we have perfect and everlasting visions of God, and that blessed One his Son Jesus Christ; a good thought of whom doth sometimes so fill us, while in this world, that it causeth joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Then shall our will and affections be ever in a burning flame of love to God and his Son Jesus Christ. Our love here hath ups and downs; but there it shall be always perfect with that perfection which is not possible in this world to be enjoyed.

Then will our conscience have that peace and joy, that neither tongue or pen of men or angels can express.

Then will our memory be so enlarged as to retain all things that happened to us in this world; so that with unspeakable aptness we shall call to mind all God's providences, all Satan's malice, all our weaknesses, all the rage of men, and how God made all work together for his glory and our good, to the everlasting ravishing of our hearts.

2. For our body, it shall be raised in power, in incorruption, a spiritual body and glorious.

It is compared to the brightness of the firmament, and to the shining of the stars for ever and ever. It is compared to the shining of the sun. It is said that then our vile body shall be like the glorious body of Jesus Christ. Their state is then to be equally glorious with angels.

And now when body and soul are thus united, who can imagine what glory they both possess? They will now be both in capacity without jarring to serve the Lord: with shouting, thanksgivings, and with a crown of everlasting joy upon their head.

In this world there cannot be the harmony and oneness of body and soul that there will be in heaven. Here the body sometimes sins against the soul, and the soul again vexes and perplexes the body with dreadful apprehensions of the wrath and judgment of God. While we are in this world, the body oft hangs this way, and the soul quite the contrary; but there in heaven they shall have such perfect union as never to jar more. The glory of the body shall so suit with the glory of the soul, and both so perfectly suit with the heavenly state, that it passeth words and thoughts.

Oh sinner, what sayest thou? How dost thou like being saved? Doth not thy mouth water? Doth not thy heart twitter at being saved? Why, come then. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

CHRIST THE GLORY OF HEAVEN.

"For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Mark, though now there shall be no need of temple, sun, or moon, yet Christ the Lamb, or the man who was offered in sacrifice for our redemption, shall be of use and benefit; "for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Wherefore, all that we who are the saved shall enjoy of glory and sweetness in another world, though we shall not enjoy it from God through Christ by and in the ordinances, yet we shall enjoy it through Christ the Lamb without them; for "the Lamb is the light of it."

By this word Lamb he would have us understand, that when we are in glory, the blood, death, and bloody conquest that the man Christ did get over our infernal enemies, will be of eternal use to us; because that benefit of Christ shall not only for ever be the foundation of our eternal felicity, but the burden of our song of glory in all our rap-

tures among the angels. It will be the blood, the blood, the redeeming blood of the Lamb. "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." It is he in whom will be found the seven eyes, the seven Spirits of God; in whose light we shall see the heights and depths of those springs and everlasting fountains and depths of glory for ever. And indeed the conceit of the contrary is foolish. Is not Christ the head, and we the members? And do not the members receive their whole light, guidance, and wisdom from it? Is not he also the price, the ground, and bottom of our happiness, both in this world and that which is to come? And is it possible it should be forgotten, or that by it our joy, light, and heaven should not be made the sweeter to all eternity? Our soul is now bound up in him as in a bundle of life; and when we come thither he is still the Christ, our life; and it is by our being where he is that we shall behold his glory and our glory, because he is glorified: "For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." As he said, "Ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice and your joy no man taketh from you."

THE GLORY OF SALVATION.

What a surprise will it be to them that now have come to God by Christ, to see themselves in heaven indeed, saved indeed, and possessed of everlasting life indeed. For alas, what is faith to possession?—faith that is mixed with many tears, that is opposed with many assaults, and that seems sometimes to be quite extinguished—I say, what is that to a seeing myself in heaven? Hence it is said that "he shall then come to be admired in them that now believe;" then they shall admire that it was their lot to believe when they were in the world. They shall also admire to think, to see, and behold what believing has brought them to; while the rest, for refusing to come to

God by Christ, drink their tears mixed with burning brimstone.

What a joy will it be to the truly godly to think now that they are come to God by Christ. It was their mercy to begin to come; it was their happiness that they continued coming; but it is their glory that they are come, that they are come to God by Christ.

To God! why, he is all in all; all that is good, essentially good, and eternally good. To God, the infinite ocean of good. Oh that I could imagine, Oh that I could think, that I might write more effectually to thee of the happy estate of them that come to God by Christ.

HEAVEN.

What gladness shall possess our heart,
When we shall see these things;
What light and life in every part
Rise like eternal springs!
O, blessed face; O, holy grace,
When shall we see this day?
Lord, fetch us to this goodly place,
We humbly to thee pray.

Thus when in heavenly harmony
These blessed saints appear,
Adorned with grace and majesty,
What gladness will be there!
Thus shall we see, thus shall we be,
O, would the day were come:
Lord Jesus, take us up to thee,
To this desired home.

Angels we also shall behold,
When we on high ascend,
Each shining like to men of gold,
And on the Lord attend.
These goodly creatures, full of grace,
Shall stand about the throne,
Each one with lightning in his face,
And shall to us be known.

There cherubim, with one accord,
Continually do cry,
"Ah, holy, holy, holy Lord,
And heavenly majesty!"
These will us in their arms embrace,
And welcome us to rest,
And joy to see us clad with grace
And of the heavens possest.

XXVIII. HELL.

Hell is a place and state utterly unknown to any in this visible world, excepting the souls of men; nor shall any for ever be capable of understanding the miseries thereof, save souls and fallen angels.

Now I think as the joys of heaven stand not only in speculation or in beholding of glory, but in a sensible enjoyment and unspeakable pleasure which these glories will yield to the soul, so the torments of hell will not stand in the present lashes and strokes which by the flames of eternal fire God will scourge the ungodly with; but the torments of hell stand much, if not in the greatest part of them, in those deep thoughts and apprehensions which souls in the next world will have of the nature and occasion of sin, of God, and of separation from him—of the eternity of those miseries, and of the utter impossibility of their help, ease, or deliverance for ever. Oh, damned souls will have thoughts that will clash with glory, clash with justice, clash with law, clash with themselves, clash with hell, and with the everlastingness of misery.

Miseries as well as mercies sharpen and make quick the apprehensions of the soul. Behold Spira in his book, Cain in his guilt, and Saul with the witch of Endor, and you shall see men ripened, men enlarged and greatened in their fancies, imaginations, and apprehensions, though not

about God and heaven and glory, yet about their loss, their misery, their woe, and their hell.

A man may endure to touch the fire with a short touch, and away; but to dwell with everlasting burnings, that is fearful. Oh then, what is dwelling with them and in them for ever and ever? We use to say, "Light burdens carried far are heavy:" what then will it be to bear that burden, that guilt, that the law and the justice and the wrath of God will lay upon the lost soul for ever? Now tell the stars, now tell the drops of the sea, and now tell the blades of grass that are spread upon the face of all the earth, if thou canst; and yet sooner mayest thou do this than count the thousands of millions of thousands of years that a damned soul shall lie in hell! Suppose every star that is now in the firmament was to burn by himself one by one, a thousand years apiece, would it not be a long while before the last of them was burnt out? and yet sooner might that be done than the damned soul be at the end of punishment.

He that has lost his soul has lost himself. He is, as I may say, now out of his own hands; he has lost himself, his soul self, his own self, his whole self, by sin and wrath; and hell hath found him. He is now no more at his own dispose, but at the dispose of justice, of wrath and hell. He is committed to prison, to hell prison, there to abide, not at pleasure, not as long and as little time as he will, but the term appointed by his Judge; nor may he there choose his own affliction, neither for manner, measure, or continuance. It is God that will spread the fire and brimstone under him, and it is God himself that will blow the fire. Isa. 30: 33.

There will be no such grace as patience in hell with him who has lost himself: here will also be wanting a

bottom for patience, to wit, the providence of God; for a providence of God, though never so dismal, is a bottom for patience to the afflicted; but men go not to hell by providence, but by sin.

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." This curse is the chief and highest of all kinds of curses. It lieth in a deprivation of all good, and in a being swallowed up of all the most fearful miseries, that a holy and just and eternal God can righteously inflict, or lay upon the soul of a sinful man.

Now let reason here come in and exercise itself in the most exquisite manner, yea, let it now count up all and all manner of curses and torments that a reasonable and immortal soul is or can be made capable of, and able to suffer under; and when it has done, it shall come infinitely short of this great anathema, this master-curse, which God has reserved amongst his treasures, and intends to bring out in that day of battle and war which he purposeth to make upon damned souls in that day.

"The sting of death is sin." Sin in the general of it is the sting of hell, for there would be no such thing as torment even there, were it not that sin is there with sinners; for the fire of hell, the indignation and wrath of God can fasten and kindle upon nothing but for or because of sin. Sin then, as sin, is the sting and the hell of hells, of the lowest and upmost hells—sin, I say, in the nature of it, simply as it is concluded both by God and the damned to be a breach of his holy law, so it is the sting of the second death, which is the worm of hell.

But then, as sin is such a sting in itself, so it is heightened, sharpened, made more keen and sharp, by those circumstances that attend it in every act; for there is not a sin at any time committed by man, but there is some circumstance or other attends it that makes it, when charged

home by God's law, bigger and sharper and more venomous and poisonous to the soul, than if it could be committed without them; and this is the sting of the hornet, the great sting. I sinned without a cause, to please a base lust, to gratify the devil: here is the sting. Again, I preferred sin before holiness, death before life, hell before heaven, the devil before God, and damnation before a Saviour: here is the sting. Again, I preferred moments before everlastings, temporals before eternals, to be racked and always slaying before the life that is blessed and endless: here is the sting. Also, this I did against light, against convictions, against conscience, against persuasions of friends and ministers, and the godly lives which I beheld in others: here is the sting. Also, this I did against warnings; yea, though I saw others fall before my face by the mighty hand of God for committing the same: here is the sting.

Sinners, would I could persuade you to hear me out: a man cannot commit a sin, but by the commission of it he doth by some circumstance or other sharpen the sting of hell, and that to pierce himself through and through and through with many sorrows.

Also, the sting of hell to some will be, that the damnation of others stands upon their score; for that by imitating them, by being deluded by them, persuaded by them, drawn in by them, others perish in hell for ever.

Ah, this will be the sting of those that are principal, chief, and as I may call them, the captain and ringleading sinners. Vipers will come out of other men's fire and flames, and settle upon, seize upon, and for ever abide upon their consciences; and this will be the sting of hell, the great sting of hell to them.

I will yet add to this, how will the fairness of some for heaven, even the thoughts of that, sting them when they come to hell. It will not be so much their fall into the pit, as from whence they fell into it, that will be to them the buzzing noise and sharpened sting of the great and

terrible hornet. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer!"—there is the sting. Thou that art exalted up to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell; though thou hast made thy nest among the stars, from thence will I fetch thee down: there is a sting. To be pulled, for and through love to some vain lust, from the everlasting gates of glory, and caused to be swallowed up for it in the belly of hell, and made to lodge for ever in the darksome chambers of death: there is the piercing sting.

But again, as there is the sting of hell, so there is the strength of that sting; for a sting, though never so sharp or venomous, yet if it wanteth strength to force it to the designed execution, it doth but little hurt. But this sting hath strength to cause it to pierce into the soul: "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." 1 Cor. 15:56; Rom. 7:8; 4:15.

Here then is the strength of the sting of hell: it is the law in the perfect penalty of it; for without the law, sin is dead; yea, where no law is, there is no transgression. The law then followeth, in the executive part of it, the soul into hell; and there strengtheneth sin, that sting in hell, to pierce the soul for ever and ever by its unutterable charging of sin on the conscience. Nor can the soul justly murmur or repine at God or his law; for that then the sharply apprehensive soul will well discern the justness, righteousness, reasonableness, and goodness of the law, and that nothing is done by the law unto it, but that which is just and equal.

This, therefore, will put great strength and force into sin to sting the soul, and to strike it with the lashes of a scorpion.

And besides these, the abiding life of God, the Judge and God of this law, will never die. When princes die, the law may be altered by which at present transgressors are bound in chains; but Oh, here is also that which will make this sting so sharp and keen: the God that executes

it will never die. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Heb. 10 : 30, 31.

"This shall they have of my hand, they shall lie down in sorrow;" they shall lie down in it, they shall make their bed there, there they shall lie. And this is the bitter pill that they must swallow down at last; for after all their tears, their sorrows, their repentings, their wishings and wouldings, and all their inventings and desires to change their state for a better, they must lie down in sorrow.

The poor condemned man that is upon the ladder or scaffold, has, if one knew them, many a long wish and long desire that he might come down again alive, or that his condition was as one of the spectators, that are not condemned and brought thither to be executed as he. How carefully also does he look with his failing eyes, to see if some one comes not from the king with a pardon for him, all the while endeavoring to fumble away, as well as he can, and to prolong the minute of his execution. But at last, when he has looked, when he has wished, when he has desired and done whatever he can, the blow with the axe, or the turn with the ladder, is his lot: so he goes off the scaffold; so he goes from among men.

And thus will it be with those we have under consideration: when all comes to all, and they have said and wished and done what they could, the judgment must not be reversed; they must lie down in sorrow.

XXIX. MISCELLANEOUS.

THE SABBATH.

This day is called the Lord's day, the day in which he rose from the dead. The Lord's day: every day, say some, is the Lord's day. Indeed this, for discourse' sake, may be granted; but strictly, no day can so properly be called the Lord's day, as this first day of the week; for that no day of the week, or of the year, has those badges of the Lord's glory upon it, nor such divine grace put upon it, as his first day of the week.

There is nothing, as I know of, that bears this title but the Lord's supper, and this day. And since Christians count it an abuse to allegorize the first, let them also be ashamed to fantasticalize the last.

The Lord's day is doubtless the day in which he rose from the dead. To be sure, it is not the old seventh day; for from the day that he arose, to the end of the Bible, we find not that he did hang so much as one twist of glory upon that; but this day is beautified with glory upon glory, and that both by the Father and the Son, by the prophets, and those that were raised from the dead thereon: therefore this day must be more than the rest.

As for the seventh day, that is gone to its grave with the signs and shadows of the Old Testament. Yea, and has such a dash left upon it by apostolical authority, that is is enough to make a Christian fly from it for ever. 2 Cor. 3.

God the Father leaves such a stamp of divine note and honor upon this day, as he never before did leave upon any, where he saith to our Lord, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;" still having respect to the first day of the week, for that and no other is the day here in-

tended by the apostle: *This day*, saith God, is the day. "And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he saith on this wise, I will give thee the sure mercies of David;" wherefore he saith in another psalm, "Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption."

Now shall not Christians, when they read that God saith, *This day*, and that too with reference to a work done on it by him so full of delight to him, and so full of life and heaven to them, set also a mark upon it? "This was the day of God's pleasure," for that his Son did rise thereon; "and shall it not be the day of my delight in him?"

Shall kings and princes and great men set a mark upon the day of their birth and coronation, and expect that both subjects and servants should do them high honor on that day; and shall the day in which Christ was both begotten and born be a day contemned by Christians?

If God remembers it, well may I. If God says, and that with all gladness of heart, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;" may not, ought not I also to set this day apart to sing the songs of my redemption in?

This day my redemption was finished.

This day my dear Jesus revived.

This day he was declared to be the Son of God with power.

Yea, this is the day in which the Lord Jesus finished a greater work than ever yet was done in the world; yea, a work in which the Father himself was more delighted than he was in making heaven and earth; and shall darkness and the shadow of death stain this day? Or shall a cloud dwell on this day? Shall God regard this day from above, and shall not his light shine upon this day? What shall be done to them that curse this day, and would not that the stars should give their light thereon? *This day!* after this day was come, God never, that we read of, made mention with delight of the old seventh-day Sabbath more.

"The woman which thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree." Gen. 3. The woman was given for a help, not a hinderance; but Satan often maketh that to become our snare which God hath given us as a blessing.

"And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done?" Gen. 3. What is this? God seems to speak as if he were astonished at the inundation of evil which the woman by her sin had overflowed the world withal. What is this that thou hast done? Thou hast undone thyself, thou hast undone thy husband, thou hast undone all the world; yea, thou hast brought a curse upon the whole creation, with an overplus of evils, plagues, and distresses.

What is this that thou hast done? Thou hast defiled thy body and soul, thou hast disabled the whole world from serving God; yea, moreover, thou hast let in the devil at the door of thy heart, and hast also made him the prince of the world. What is this that thou hast done? Ah, little, little do sinners know what they have done, when they have transgressed the law of the Lord.

As death and the curse came into the world by a woman, so also did life and health: "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman." Yea, to show how much those that came after did abhor the act of the mother, this sex, in the Old Testament, coveted children, if happily this or that woman might be the mother of the Saviour of the world. I will say again, that when the Saviour was come, woman rejoiced in him, before either man or angel. I read not that ever man did give unto Christ so much as one groat; but the women followed him and ministered unto him of their substance. It was a woman that washed his feet with tears, and a woman that anointed his body to the burial. They were women that wept when he was going

to the cross; and women that followed him from the cross, and that sat by his sepulchre when he was buried. They were women that were first with him at his resurrection-morn, and women that brought tidings first to the disciples that he was risen from the dead. Women therefore are highly favored, and show by these things that they are sharers with us in the grace of life.

All the glory of this world, had not Adam had a wife, could not have completed this man's blessedness. He would yet have been wanting.

THE FAMILY.

A master of a family and a mistress of the same are those that are entrusted of God with those under their tuition and care to be brought up for him, be they children or servants.

Look to it and consider with thyself whether thou hast done such duty and service for God in this matter, that, setting common facilities aside, thou canst with good conscience lift up thy face unto God; the which to be sure thou canst by no means do, if iniquity to the utmost be not banished out of thy house.

And will it not be a sad complaint that thy servant shall take up against thee before the Judge, at the last day, that he learnt the way to destruction in thy house, who art a professor? Servants, though themselves be carnal, expect, when they come into the house of professors, that there they shall see religion in spangling colors; but behold, when he enters thy door, he finds sin and wickedness there. There is pride instead of humility, and height of raillery instead of meekness and holiness of mind. He looked for a house full of virtue, and behold nothing but spider-webs; fair and plausible abroad, but like the sow in the mire at home.

"Bless me," saith such a servant, "are these the re-

ligious people? are these the servants of God, where iniquity is made so much of and is so highly entertained?"

And now is his heart filled with prejudice against all religion, or else he turns hypocrite like his master and mistress, wearing, as they, a cloak of religion to cover all abroad, while all is naked and shameful at home.

But perhaps thy heart is so hard and thy mind so united to the pleasing of thy vile affections, that thou wilt say, "What care I for my servant? I took him to do my work, not to train him up in religion." Well, suppose the soul of thy servant be thus little worth in thine eyes; yet what wilt thou say for thy children, who behold all thy ways, and are as capable of drinking up the poison of thy footsteps, as the swine is of drinking up swill: I say, what wilt thou do for them? Children will learn to be wicked of parents—of professing parents soonest of all; they will be tempted to think all that they do is right. I say, what wilt thou say to this? Or art thou like the ostrich whom God hath deprived of wisdom, and hath hardened her heart against her young? Will it please thee, when thou shalt see that thou hast brought forth children to the murderer? or when thou shalt hear them cry, I learnt to go on in the paths of sin by the carriage of professing parents? If it was counted of old a sad thing for a man to bring forth children to the sword, as Ephraim did; what will it be for a man to bring up children for hell? Hos. 9:13.

"And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters." He lived therefore to see the fruit of his good rule and government in the church, even to see his teachable and dedicated son caught up to God and to his throne.

A good encouragement to all rulers in the house of God, and also to all godly parents, to teach and rule in the fear of God; for that is the way to part with church-members and children with comfort; yea, that is the way, if we

shall outlive them, to send them to heaven and to God before us.

If parents carry it lovingly towards their children, mixing their mercies with loving rebukes, and their loving rebukes with fatherly and motherly compassions, they are more likely to save their children than by being churlish and severe towards them. But if they do not save them, if their mercy do them no good, yet it will greatly ease them at the day of death to consider, I have done by love as much as I could to save and deliver my child from hell.

Let them that name the name of Christ depart from family-iniquity. There is a house-iniquity—an iniquity that loves not to walk abroad, but to harbor within doors. This the holy man David was aware of; therefore he said that he would behave himself wisely, in a perfect way; yea, saith he, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart."

Many that show like saints abroad, yet act the part of devils when they are at home by giving way to this house-iniquity. This iniquity meeteth the man and his wife at the very threshold of the door, and will not suffer them to enter, no, not with one foot into the house, in peace: but how far this is from walking together as heirs of the grace of life, is easy to be determined. Men should carry it in love to their wives, as Christ doth to his church; and wives should carry it to their husbands, as the church ought to carry it to her Saviour, Eph. 5:21–28; 1 Pet. 3:7; and until each relation be managed with respect to these things, this house-iniquity will be cherished there. Oh, God sees within doors as well as without, and will judge too for the iniquity of the house as well as for that more open.

A man's house and his conduct there do more bespeak the nature and temper of his mind than all public profession. If I were to judge of a man for my life, I would not

judge of him by his open profession, but by his domestic behaviors.

Open profession is like a man's best cloak, which is worn by him when he walks abroad, and with many is made but little use of at home. But now what a man is at home, that he is indeed. There is abroad, my house, my closet, my heart; and my house, my closet, show most what I am: though not to the world, yet to my family and to angels.

To make religion and the power of godliness the chief of my designs at home, before those among whom God by a special hand has placed me, is that which is pleasing to God, and which obtaineth a good report of him. Genesis 18:17–19.

Character of Talkative. He talketh of prayer, of repentance, of faith, and of the new birth; but he knows but only to talk of them. I have been in his family, and have observed him both at home and abroad. His house is as empty of religion as the white of an egg is of savor. There is there neither prayer nor sign of repentance for sin; yea, the brute in his kind serves God far better than he He is the very stain, reproach, and shame of religion to all that know him: it can hardly have a good word in all that end of the town where he dwells, through him. Thus say the common people that know him, "A saint abroad and a devil at home." His poor family find it so: he is such a churl, such a railer at, and so unreasonable with his servants, that they neither know how to do for or speak to him.

Domestic iniquity stands also in the disorders of children and servants. Children's unlawful carriage to their parents is a great house-iniquity, yea, and a common one too. 2 Tim. 3:2, 3.

Disobedience to parents is one of the sins of the last

days. O it is horrible to behold how irreverently, how saucily, and malpertly, children, yea, professing children, at this day carry it to their parents; snapping and checking, curbing and rebuking them, as if they had never received their being by them, or had never been beholden to them for bringing them up; yea, as if the relation was lost, or as if they had received a dispensation from God to dishonor and disobey parents.

I will add, that this sin reigns in little and great; for not only the small and young, but men are disobedient to their parents; and indeed this is the sin with a shame, that men shall be "disobedient to parents." Where nowadays shall we see children that are come to men and women's estate, carry it as by the word they are bound, to their aged and worn-out parents? I say, where is the honor they should put upon them? Who speak to their aged parents with that due regard to that relation, to their age, to their worn-out condition, that becomes them? Is it not common nowadays for parents to be brought into bondage and servitude by their children; for parents to be under, and children above; for parents to be debased, and children to lord it over them?

This sin is, I fear, grown to such a height in some, as to make them weary of their parents, and of doing their duty to them. Yea, I wish that some be not murderers of fathers and mothers by their thoughts, while they secretly long after and desire their death, that the inheritance may be theirs, and that they may be delivered from obedience to their parents. 1 Tim. 1 : 9. This is a sin in the house, in the family; a sin that is kept close; but God sees it, and has declared his dislike against it, by an implicit threatening to cut them off that are guilty of it. Eph. 5 : 1–3.

Many that have had very hopeful beginnings for heaven, have, by virtue of the mischiefs that have attended unlaw-

ful marriages, Deut. 7 : 4, 5; 2 Cor. 6 : 14, miserably and fearfully miscarried. Soon after such marriages, conviction, the first step towards heaven, hath ceased; prayers, the next step towards heaven, have ceased; hungerings and thirstings after salvation, another step towards the kingdom of heaven, have ceased. In a word, such marriages have estranged them from the word, from their godly and faithful friends, and have brought them again into carnal company, among carnal friends, and also into carnal delights; where and with whom they have, in conclusion, both sinfully abode and miserably perished.

Servants are goers as well as comers: take heed that thou give them no occasion to scandal the gospel when they are gone, for what they observed thee unrighteously to do when they were with thee.

Though thy parents be never so low, and thou thyself never so high, yet he is thy father, and she thy mother, and they must be in thine eyes in great esteem.

BUNYAN'S DOMESTIC CHARACTER.

But notwithstanding these helps from God, I found myself a man encompassed with infirmities; the parting with my wife and poor children,* hath often been to me in this place as the pulling the flesh from the bones; and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of these great mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was like to meet with, should I be taken from them; especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all beside. Oh, the thoughts of the hardships which my poor blind one might undergo, would seem to

* Bunyan had four children, all by his first marriage. About 1658, some three years after his baptism, he married his second wife, the heroic Elizabeth. In 1660 he was first imprisoned.

break my heart in pieces. Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee. But yet, recalling myself, thought I, I must venture you all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you. Oh, I saw in this condition I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the heads of his wife and children; yet, thought I, I must do it, I must do it: and now I thought on those two milch kine that were to carry the ark of God into another country, and to leave their calves behind them. 1 Sam. 6:10

DR. OWEN.

What if, as you suggest, the sober Dr. Owen, though he told me and others, at first, he would write an epistle to my book, ("Peaceable Principles and True,") yet waved it afterwards; this was also to my advantage; because it was the earnest solicitations of several of you that at that time stopped his hand: and perhaps it was more for the glory of God that truth should go naked into the world, than as seconded by so mighty an armor-bearer as he.

TRUTH.

The truth is of that nature, that the more it is opposed, the more glory it appears in; and the more the adversary objects against it, the more it will clear itself.

There belongs to every true notion of truth, a power; the notion is the shell, the power the kernel and life.

It is impossible that a carnal heart should conceive of the weight that truth lays upon the conscience of a believer. They see nothing, alas, nothing at all but a truth; and, say they, Are you such fools as to stand groaning to bear

up that, or what is contained therein? They see not the weight, the glory, the weight of glory, that is in a truth of God; and therefore they laugh at them that will count it worth the while to endure so much to support it from falling to the ground.

Truths are often delivered to us, like wheat in full ears, to the end we should rub them out before we eat them, and take pains about them, before we have the comfort of them.

STYLE.

I could, were I so pleased, use higher strains,
And for applause on tenters stretch my brains;
But what needs that? The arrow out of sight
Does not the sleeper nor the watchman fright:
To shoot too high doth make but children gaze,
'Tis that which hits the man doth him amaze.

Should all be forced their brains to lay aside,
That cannot regulate the flowing tide
By this or that man's fancy, we should have
The wise unto the fool become a slave.

Words easy to be understood do often hit the mark, when high and learned ones do only pierce the air. He also that speaks to the weakest, may make the learned understand him; when he that striveth to be high, is not only for the most part understood but of a sort, but also many times is neither understood by them nor by himself.

THE OLD AND NEW DISPENSATIONS.

There is as great a difference between their dispensation and ours for comfort, as there is between the making of a bond with a promise to seal it, and the actual sealing. It was made indeed in their time, but it was not sealed until the blood was shed on Calvary.

THE PILGRIM IN NEW ENGLAND.

My Pilgrim's book has travelled sea and land;
Yet could I never come to understand
That it was slighted, or turned out of door
By any kingdom, were they rich or poor.
In France, and Flanders, where men kill each other,
My Pilgrim is esteemed a friend, a brother.
In Holland too, 'tis said, as I am told,
My Pilgrim is with some worth more than gold;
Highlanders and wild Irish can agree
My Pilgrim should familiar with them be.
'Tis in *New England* under such advance,
Receives there so much loving countenance,
As to be trimmed, new clothed, and decked with gems,
That it may show its features and its limbs.
Yet more, so public doth my Pilgrim walk,
That of him thousands daily sing and talk.

NOTICES OF BUNYAN.

This wonderful book, [the Pilgrim's Progress,] while it obtains admiration from the most fastidious critics, is loved by those who are too simple to admire it. Dr. Johnson, all whose studies were desultory, and who hated, as he said, to read books through, made an exception in favor of the Pilgrim's Progress. That work, he said, was one of the two or three which he wished longer. In every nursery the Pilgrim's Progress is a greater favorite than Jack the Giant-killer. Every reader knows the strait and narrow path as well as he knows a road in which he has gone backward and forward a hundred times. This is the highest miracle of genius—that things which are not should be as though they were, that the imaginations of one mind should become the personal recollections of another. Cowper said, forty or fifty years ago, that he dared not name John Bunyan in his verse, for fear of moving a sneer. We live in better times; and we are not afraid to say, that though there were many clever men in England during the latter half of the seventeenth century, there were only two great creative minds. One of those minds produced the *Paradise Lost*, the other the *Pilgrim's Progress*.

The style of Bunyan is delightful to every reader, and invaluable as a study to every person who wishes to obtain a wide command over the English language. The vocabulary is the vocabulary of the common people. There is not an expression, if we except a few technical terms of theology, which would puzzle the rudest peasant. We have observed several pages which do not contain a single word of more than two syllables. Yet no writer has said more exactly what he meant to say. For magnificence, for pathos, for vehement exhortation, for subtle disquisition, for every purpose of the poet, the orator, and the divine, this homely dialect, the dialect of plain working-men, was sufficient. There is no book in our literature on which we could

so readily stake the fame of the old unpolluted English language—no book which shows so well how rich that language is in its own proper wealth, and how little it has been improved by all that it has borrowed. T. B. Macaulay—Essays.

To the names of Baxter and Howe must be added the name of a man far below them in station and in acquired knowledge, but in virtue their equal, and in genius their superior, John Bunyan. Bunyan had been bred a tinker, and had served as a private soldier in the parliamentary army. Early in his life he had been fearfully tortured by remorse for his youthful sins, the worst of which seem, however, to have been such as the world thinks venial. His keen sensibility and his powerful imagination made his internal conflicts singularly terrible. He fancied that he was under sentence of reprobation, that he had committed blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, that he had sold Christ, that he was actually possessed by a demon. Sometimes loud voices from heaven cried out to warn him. Sometimes fiends whispered impious suggestions in his ear. He saw visions of distant mountain-tops, on which the sun shone brightly, but from which he was separated by a waste of snow. He felt the devil behind him pulling his clothes. He thought that the brand of Cain had been set upon him. He feared that he was about to burst asunder like Judas. His mental agony disordered his health. One day he shook like a man in the palsy. On another day he felt a fire within his breast. It is difficult to understand how he survived sufferings so intense and so long-continued. At length the clouds broke. From the depths of despair the penitent passed to a state of serene felicity. An irresistible impulse now urged him to impart to others the blessing of which he was himself possessed. He joined the Baptists, and became a preacher and writer. His education had been that of a mechanic. He knew no language but the English, as it was spoken by the common people. He had studied no great model of composition, with the exception—an important exception undoubtedly—of our noble translation of the Bible. His spelling was bad. He frequently transgressed the rules of grammar. Yet his native force of genius, and his experimental knowledge of all the religious passions, from despair to ecstasy, amply supplied in him the want of learning.

His rude oratory roused and melted hearers who listened without interest to the labored discourses of great logicians and Hebraists. His works were widely circulated among the humbler classes. One of them, the Pilgrim's Progress, was in his own lifetime translated into several foreign languages. It was, however, scarcely known to the learned and polite, and had been during nearly a century the delight of pious cottagers and artisans before it was publicly commended by any man of high literary eminence. At length critics condescended to inquire where the secret of so wide and so durable a popularity lay. They were compelled to own that the ignorant multitude had judged more correctly than the learned, and that the despised little book was really a masterpiece. Bunyan is indeed as decidedly the first of allegorists as Demosthenes is the first of orators, or Shakspeare the first of dramatists. Other allegorists have shown equal ingenuity, but no other allegorist has ever been able to touch the heart, and to make abstractions objects of terror, of pity, and of love.

It may be doubted whether any English dissenter had suffered more severely under the penal laws than John Bunyan. Of the twenty-seven years which had elapsed since the Restoration, he had passed twelve in confinement. He still persisted in preaching; but that he might preach, he was under the necessity of disguising himself like a carter. He was often introduced into meetings through back doors with a smockfrock on his back, and a whip in his hand. If he had thought only of his own ease and safety, he would have hailed the indulgence with delight. He was now at length free to pray and exhort in open day. His congregation rapidly increased; thousands hung upon his words; and at Bedford, where he ordinarily resided, money was plentifully contributed to build a meeting-house for him. His influence among the common people was such that the government would willingly have bestowed on him some municipal office; but his vigorous understanding and his stout English heart were proof against all delusion and all temptation. He felt assured that the proffered toleration was merely a bait intended to lure the Puritan party to destruction; nor would he, by accepting a place for which he was not legally qualified, recognize the validity of the dispensing power. One of the last acts of his virtuous

life was to decline an interview to which he was invited by an agent of the government. T. B. Macaulay—History of England.

The demeanor of Sir Matthew Hale in the case of John Bunyan, the author of the Pilgrim's Progress, shows him paying respect both to the rules of law and to the dictates of humanity. This wonderful man—who, though bred a tinker, showed a genius little inferior to that of Dante—having been illegally convicted by the court of Quarter-sessions, was lying in prison under his sentence in the jail of Bedford. Soon after the restoration of Charles II., the young enthusiast had been arrested while he was preaching at a meeting in a private house; and, refusing to enter into an engagement that he would preach no more, had been indicted as "a person who devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear divine service, and a common upholder of unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this realm."

Little do we know what is for our permanent good. Had Bunyan then been discharged and allowed to enjoy liberty, he no doubt would have returned to his trade, filling up his intervals of leisure with field-preaching; his name would not have survived his own generation, and he could have done little for the religious improvement of mankind. The prison-doors were shut upon him for twelve years. Being cut off from the external world, he communed with his own soul; and inspired by Him who touched Isaiah's hallowed lips with fire, he composed the noblest of allegories, the merit of which was first discovered by the lowly, but which is now lauded by the most refined critics, and which has done more to awaken piety and to enforce the precepts of Christian morality, than all the sermons that have been published by all the prelates of the Anglican church.

Lord Campbell.

The Pilgrim's Progress is a book which makes its way through the fancy to the understanding and the heart. The child peruses it with wonder and delight; in youth we discover the genius which it displays; its worth is apprehended as we advance in years; and we perceive its merits feelingly in declining age. If it is not a well of English undefiled, to which the poet as well as the philologist must repair if they would drink of the living

waters, it is a clear stream of current English, the vernacular of his age—sometimes indeed in its rusticity and coarseness, but always in its plainness and its strength. Robert Southey.

No man of common-sense and common integrity can deny that Bunyan, the tinker of Elstow, was a practical atheist, a worthless contemptible infidel, a vile rebel to God and goodness, a common profligate. Now be astonished, O heaven, to eternity, and wonder, O earth and hell, while time endures. Behold this very man become a miracle of mercy, a mirror of wisdom, goodness, holiness, truth, and love. See his polluted soul cleansed and adorned by divine grace, his guilt pardoned, the divine law inscribed upon his heart, the divine image, or the resemblance of God's moral perfections impressed upon his soul.

Mr. Ryland.

It has been the lot of John Bunyan, an unlettered artisan, to do more than one in a hundred millions of human beings, even in civilized society, is usually able to do. He has produced a work of imagination of such decided originality as not only to have commanded profound admiration on its first appearance, but amidst all changes of time and style and modes of thinking, to have maintained its place in the popular literature of every succeeding age, with the probability that, so long as the language in which it is written endures, it will not cease to be read by a great number of the youth of all future generations at that period of life when their minds, their imaginations, and their hearts are most impressible with moral excellence, splendid picture, and religious sentiment. It would be difficult to name another work of any kind in our native tongue, of which so many editions have been printed, of which so many readers have lived and died, the character of whose lives and deaths must have been more or less affected by its lessons and examples, its fictions and realities. James Montgomery.

I know of no book, the Bible excepted as above all comparison, which I, according to my judgment and experience, could so safely recommend as teaching and enforcing the whole saving truth, according to the mind that was in Christ Jesus, as the Pilgrim's Progress. It is in my conviction the best *Summa The-*

ologiæ Evangelicæ ever produced by a writer not miraculously inspired. Coleridge's Remains.

So great was Bunyan's popularity as a preacher, that an eye-witness says, when he preached in London, "If there were but one day's notice given, there would be more people come together to hear him preach than the meeting-house would hold. I have seen, to hear him preach, about twelve hundred at a morning lecture, by seven o'clock on a working-day, in the dark winter time." Charles Doe.

I hold John Bunyan to have been a man of incomparably greater genius than any of them, [the old English divines,] and to have given a far truer and more edifying picture of Christianity. His Pilgrim's Progress seems to be a complete reflection of Scripture, with none of the rubbish of the theologians mixed up with it.
Thomas Arnold, D. D.

O thou whom, borne on fancy's eager wing
Back to the season of life's happy spring,
I pleased remember, and while memory yet
Holds fast her office here, can ne'er forget;
Ingenious Dreamer! in whose well-told tale,
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail;
Whose humorous vein, strong sense, and simple style,
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile;
Witty, and well-employed, and like thy Lord,
Speaking in parables his slighted word;
I name thee not, lest so despised a name
Should move a sneer at thy deserved fame;
Yet e'en in transitory life's late day,
That mingles all my brown with sober gray,
Revere the man, whose Pilgrim marks the road
And guides the Progress of the soul to God.
Cowper.

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